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The Week

THE British government's announcement of its decision to withdraw its troops from the Rhineland without agreement with the other Allies, and whether or not the Young plan is ratified, is another indication of the Labor cabinet's intention to take a strong line, independent of the French policy which has so long held European recovery in check for the sake of nationalist advantage. Meanwhile the halting negotiations at the Hague have made but meager progress in dealing with what is after all but one of the objections raised by Mr. Snowden to the Young plan, and a minor one. To restore the Spa percentages for division of the reparations receipts would increase the portion going to Great Britain by a paltry $10,000,000, but the other Allies have not found a way to grant even this. If they had done so, however, they would still have to satisfy his demand for a larger share in the non-postponable annuities, and for a reduction of payments in kind. They would furthermore be obliged to reckon with his expected endeavor to curtail the operations of the International Bank. The Hague parley may succeed, but the chances are that it will adjourn without action as the time approaches for the League of Nations economic conference at Geneva. It has been said that the conference which devised the Young settlement, on the brink of failure for so long, was carried on more in the contentious atmosphere of the Versailles treaty negotiations than in that which brought forth the Dawes plan. The British experts gave way at the last moment to prevent failure. Had they known that the Labor government was to come to power and adopt its present policy, they probably would not have done so. The other features of the scheme might have been adopted, but the division of the proceeds at least would have been left to diplomatic negotiation.

IN MANCHURIA there exists one of those border-land situations between war and peace which calls for prompt and decisive action on the part of neutrals if the danger of serious hostilities is to be averted. Negotiations have apparently ceased; border raids and troop concentrations are constantly reported. Both China and Russia have in the Pact of Paris foresworn war (except for defense) but no machinery exists to decide which is the defender and which is the aggressor, and thus to place the responsibility for any possible warfare. The Pacific Four-Power pact has been unsuccessfully invoked; its ineffectuality is largely due to the fact that Russia is not a signatory, and the United States has no diplomatic connection with her. We might look for action from the League of Nations, which has in theory prepared for just such a situation as this. But Russia is not a member. In addition, any action it might take would be seriously compromised by the absence of the United States from its councils. This is certainly a situation in which this country ought to coöperate wholeheartedly with the League. If war occurs in Asia, the United States will bear its full share of responsibility, first in having contributed so much to the outlawry of Russia from the family of nations, second in failing to act with the established world organization.

THE BEST that can be said of the Senate Finance Committee's revision of the Hawley-Smoot tariff bill is that it is not so bad as it would

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have been, had not widespread public protest been aroused. Those schedules against which most of the outcry originally arose have been modified: the sugar duties are lower than in the House draft of the bill, most of the lumber products and shingles are put back on the free list. On sugar and flooring products, however, the Senate tariff is higher than the existing law. Prominent Republican interests have been well taken care of—du Pont chemicals and Mellon aluminum by virtual embargoes. A prohibitive duty on wool rags will put out of business the manufacturers of twenty-dollar suits. The proposed bill is still, in spite of minor exceptions like automobiles which are not likely to be imported anyway, a general revision upward. It is still, in spite of its masquerade as a measure of farm relief, an instrument which will increase the prices of the things farmers have to buy far more than the prices of the crops they have to sell. The Democratic and Progressive opposition to it is formidable enough to prevent its passage for many months, and the longer it is discussed, the more unpopular it is likely to become. There is no excuse for tariff revision upward by anybody; and a general tariff revision by Congress is turning out to be a dreary mess, as we knew it would.

ONE of the few duties lopped off is that on manganese. Before the war, the greater part of the ferro-alloys used in the United States was imported. But with the foreign supply cut off, ferro-alloy manufacture became an infant industry, and, as is our sentimental custom, became also, with the cessation of hostilities and the re-opening of the European market, a proper subject for the protective system of incubator cultivation. In 1922 manganese was taken off the free list, and a duty of one cent a pound imposed upon ores carrying more than 30 percent of the alloy. Most of the American manganese is produced in the Rocky Mountain and Pacific Coast states, and used by steel manufacturing concerns in the East. For a short time after 1922 the national output increased; but, in 1926 (we borrow from that admirably level-headed treatise by Berglund and Wright, "The Tariff on Iron and Steel," just published by the Institute of Economics) it began to fall off. And imports, the heavy duty notwithstanding, have mounted prodigiously. The infant industry has stayed alive. Now, simultaneous with the announcement that the United States Steel Corporation has contracted for a huge supply of manganese from Russia, comes a vote of the Senate Finance Committee, putting manganese back on the free list once more. That means, no doubt, that the Steel Corporation has suddenly become soliticious about the burden which the consumer is bearing. Fine! Now how about a reduction in the tariff rate on that species of iron picturesquely known as "merchant pigs"? And how about lower duties on the other steel products, which do not need them anyway, since our steel makers are competing with great success in foreign markets?

AS THE American delegates go (via Moscow and Siberia) to the biennial meeting of the Institute of Pacific Relations to be held in Kyoto this fall, it is well to wish them luck in persuading the Russians to attend the conference. There, in friendly but strictly unofficial meetings with the Chinese and other Pacific powers represented, the Russians might make progress in coming to some understanding of the critical issue which has recently developed in Manchuria. It is not the business of the Institute to conduct negotiations, pass resolutions, or take any action whatever, and its merbership, though distinguished and representative, rigidly excludes officials or other governmental personages. That makes it all the more hopeful as an agency for study, for the frank exchange of opinions, and as a breeding ground of better international understanding which governments would dislike to ignore. If the Russians had been invited, and had attended the previous meetings, it is quite possible that the present Manchurian crisis might have been avoided. At any rate, it would have been much better understood, and moves could not now be made under cover of international darkness. A seed of possible future trouble—the conflict of Japanese interests with Chinese sovereignty in Manchuria—will be one of the subjects thoroughly discussed at the conference.

GOVERNOR Roosevelt gave us good news when he announced that his Agricultural Advisory Commission has planned a complete survey of New York State as a basis for a state plan. What are the different types of soil in each locality and what are they best fitted for? What are the weather conditions, the rainfall, etc.? What land should be reforested, what used for specific types of agriculture, what for recreation, and what for other purposes? Only with such knowledge can a program of development, of reforestation, of parks and of agricultural revival be carried on intelligently. In addition, a real state plan would have to contemplate such things as water supplies for cities, power resources, transportation routes, and the encouragement of new and smaller manufacturing centers away from the overgrown and congested regions. The article in this issue of the New Republic on the land economic survey in Michigan indicates a little of the possibilities of applied economic geography. Slowly we are learning that we can not profit much by allowing the use of the land to drift on as it will in ignorance and confusion. A good geographical plan must be the basis of a good society—whether for city, region, state or nation.

AS THE Gastonia trial begins, it is well not to forget that the attempt to convict these labor leaders for murder is not the whole of the labor struggle in

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Southern cotton districts. A strike is in progress in Marion, North Carolina, where the National Guard has been called out to police the picketing. There are numerous other strikes and lockouts. Although most of these groups of workers are being led, not by Communists as they were at Gastonia, but by members of the United Textile Workers, a regular union affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, they are being opposed just as bitterly by the employers as are those who happen to have been led by the extreme radicals. Unrest in the mills is spontaneous and contagious; the present problem of the labor organizers is not to arouse it, but to hold it in check and mobilize it for effective trade-union action. It is curious to see the Southern employers blaming "northern influence" for the inevitable results of their own policy of low wages, long hours and speeding up. Especially so when we remember that many of the mills were established and are controlled by northern capital.

THE EQUITY-HOLLYWOOD fight has come to an abrupt halt. Mr. Frank Gillmore has advised members of Equity that they are free to go to work under non-Equity contracts, and the Motion Picture Producers, Inc., are in complete possession of the field. The reasons for so sudden a collapse of the fight for an Equity shop in Hollywood are, at this writing, obscure; there has been dissension within the ranks of Equity, and mutual recriminations between Mr. Gillmore and Miss Ethel Barrymore seem to hold the center of the stage. But it is unnecessary to write *Finis* to the Equity attempt to enter the films. If conditions in Hollywood continue, as did conditions in the Broadway theater, to bear down harshly on actors and actresses, those actors can have no choice but to rebel again and again. Solidarity between highly paid stars and the rank and file may be more difficult to achieve in the pictures than it was on the stage, but it is not impossible.

MR. HERBERT HOOVER has written a little piece for the National Recreation Congress, which is presently to meet in Louisville, Kentucky.

> This civilization is not going to depend so much on what we do when we work as on what we do in our time off.
>
> We are organizing the production of leisure. We need better organization for its consumption.

Organization for the consumption of leisure! The President, who in such messages acts, of necessity, as the automatic loudspeaker which summarizes the uncritical opinions of all of us, has voiced perfectly that queer anti-social contradiction which lies at the bottom of so much American thinking. You organize to get something done. But when a man is determined to get something done can he, by any stretch of the imagination, be conceived as enjoying leisure? Our civilization may well depend upon what we do in our time off. But what would happen to that civilization if we suddenly decided to take some time off? If we decided, that is, not to use our "leisure" for the purpose of consuming furiously the products which we have just so furiously produced? The question has been asked before; and if it be asked again, and again, it may, possibly, jar the blissful, unconscious American faith that we'll have a fine social life by and by if only we can get it organized. You have a social relationship when you have intercommunication, when you have conscious effect and conscious response—when, in short, men are behaving like human beings and not machines. Let us by all means organize for work. And, if we must, let us organize for play. But in that event, let us at least admit that what we get done bears no relation to leisure. And let us admit that the measure of its social quality is adequately represented by two motorists who automatically stop their cars on opposite sides of a street corner when the traffic light flashes red.

IT IS NECESSARY to add one more to the unpleasant stories of bank failures which have been crowding the pages of the press of late, the story of the Kansas City Joint Stock Land Bank. It is not new; and it has received none of the publicity which has been accorded the recent banking scandals in New York and New Jersey. But it is all too well deserving of its place on the front pages—a place which it will get, if the resolutions calling for an investigation of the Federal Farm Loan Board, introduced in the last session of Congress by Representative Stobbs of Massachusetts, and Representative Cramton of Michigan, are put through when Congress re-convenes. The Kansas City Joint Stock Land Bank (and five other banks in five different middle western cities) were subjected to a virtual raid several years ago. National Bank examiners from the Treasury, accompanied by armed secret service men, descended upon, and forthwith closed, these institutions. Some months after the raid, an assistant secretary of the Treasury stated that all these banks were solvent. Yet a receivership was declared for the Kansas City Joint Stock Land Bank. In 1928, the receiver's report indicated a margin of several millions more assets than liabilities; yet in 1929, assessments of double liability were levied upon all stockholders in the bank. Stockholders resist payment; and the Federal Farm Loan Board (which is responsible for examination of the banks and hence for their closing) resists even more determinedly the efforts of stockholders and others to secure sufficient information to arrange this queer series of events into some sort of logical pattern.

ADD TO THE foregoing items, the fact that not long ago the whole Joint Stock wing of the system, composed of fifty privately-owned banks with three-quarters of a billion assets, was exempted by Con-

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gress from the restrictions of the Clayton Anti-Trust Act, and you have both the reasons why an investigation is in order, and the outline of one very promising road for that investigation to explore. It should be remembered that there are two wings of the Federal Farm Loan system: one, the Joint Stock banks; the other, the farmers' coöperatively owned Federal Land banks. These two wings have been competing for control of the farm mortgage business. In addition (and here is where the sleight-of-hand work seems to have taken place) there has been a scrap within the Joint Stock banks for the control of that branch. It has been one of those private fights in which, no matter how many non-combatants may be laid out by stray bricks, no one but the principals is supposed to be interested. When the federal raiders arrived, the weaker principal and his ally went down for the full count.

WITH THOSE bankers *hors de combat*, and with the generous exemption from anti-trust regulations granted by Congress, the winner of the scrap very obviously has horseshoes in his gloves, as far as the contest with the farmers' Federal Land Banks is concerned. The life blood of these banks is new business. With the Joint Stock banks practically freed from competition and able to promote mergers at their own sweet will, it is not hard to predict where the new business is going to go. The affair is more than a private financial intrigue. For it must also be remembered that, due to agricultural depression, banks and finance corporations have been acquiring enormous farm holdings at low cost. With the victorious financial combinations holding the land, and the farmers, as usual, holding the bag, agriculture had best tighten its belt as a prelude to enjoying one more winter of American prosperity.

WHY HAS Detroit grown mighty?" Mighty what? does some irreverent person ask? That is not the point; let us be constructive. There is a weekly paper published in Detroit named The Detroit Saturday Night. The Detroit Saturday Night is read by the better people in the city. It is a paper with a message, a good hard-headed, face-the-facts, down-with-sentimentality sort of a journal. Once a year it gathers itself and its message together for one super-effort and explodes —Bang!—in fine Detroit fashion, in an "Annual Open Shop Number." Detroit, Detroit the Dynamic, Detroit the City of Destiny, has grown mighty, as a Mr. Jacob Nathan explains in the feature article, because of the Open Shop. There may have been certain contributing factors, but the fundamental reason is so clear that Mr. Nathan is able simply to assert it, without bothering with proof. Businesses may fail in Detroit—the list of the automobile companies alone, which have gone on the rocks, is impressively long—but if they do, that, of course, has nothing to do with the Open Shop.

Another Power Plot

THE air of injured innocence assumed by the electric power industry whenever it is adversely criticized can hardly be maintained in the face of a secret memorandum, recently brought to light by the Baltimore Sun, with the information that it was prepared, probably by someone in the National Electric Light Association, for circulation among the controlling spirits of the industry. It is entitled "The Federal Water Power Act and Its Administration, a Summary with Suggestions."

The Water Power Act governs the leasing of power rights on navigable streams—which are under federal jurisdiction. It establishes a Commission composed of the Secretaries of War, Interior and Agriculture, with a permanent staff, to administer the law. It specifies that a power site may be leased for fifty years, the government having the right to recapture the plant at the end of that time. The price which the government is to pay is defined as the "actual legitimate cost" of construction, less certain items, the chief of which is a reserve set up for depreciation. The larger the reserve, the smaller the price. It is a duty of the Commission to engage in careful supervision of accounting, in order that the price of recapture may be accurately known.

The New Republic has in the past commented upon the fact that the accounting work of the Federal Power Commission was severely handicapped by lack of adequate appropriations. Who was responsible for so crippling the Commission we did not know. The confidential memorandum supplies the clue. It states, "Despite our efforts to curtail the work of this department, it appears to be expanding. . . ." And later, it adds, "The foregoing statement shows how critical is the situation which now results from an increased appropriation from Congress which is to provide for an increase in the personnel and consequent activity of the accounting staff of the Commission."

What makes good accounting a menace to the power companies? Its adverse effect upon their designs, as revealed in the memorandum, is threefold. The water-power law specified that the depreciation reserve, to be deducted from the figure of their construction cost, should be reckoned according to the practice of the Interstate Commerce Commission. This means that it must be regarded as a regular operating expense, being built up on the basis of the probable life of the plant and equipment. The companies, on the contrary, want the right to control the amount put into the depreciation reserve, and to pay it out of surplus profits. By so doing, they could kill two birds with one stone. They could pay more money currently to the stockholders, and leave less in the reserve, so that the government would have to pay more to recapture the property.

But the author of the memorandum is worrying not only about the properties under the water-power act, but about the whole industry. His second reason for alarm may best be told in his own words:

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> Shortly following the passage of the Federal Water Power act a movement for uniformity in accounting for the electric and gas utilities was fostered and encouraged. Advantage was taken of this oportunity to have the National Association of Railway and Public Utility Commissioners accept, as the work of its own committee, a classification of accounts prepared by our accountants. This classification, as you know, omits the positive depreciation accounting requirements, as such, and substitutes a provision for retirement expense, which may be considered as an appropriation from surplus, if showing it as an expense would impair the earning statement.

It should first be noted that the "National Association of Railway and Public Utility Commissioners" is the association of state officials having regulatory duties. It thus accepted a system prepared by the power companies. The memorandum goes on to say that the reckoning of depreciation specified by the Federal Commission is in accord with the method "generally presented to State regulatory commissions in rate cases." Therefore, the memorandum continues,

> Consideration in open hearings before the Federal Power Commission of this matter will call attention to the disparity between the two methods of accounting, and without doubt will ultimately be reflected in our having to render statements of earnings reduced below our present showing with a consequent dangerous effect on our stock values, now so favorably quoted.

The companies do not want sound reserves, if they would interfere with stock promotion and artificially inflated profits. They want to use one method of accounting in rate cases, and another method in recapture cases.

As for the third cause for the power interests' alarm, it will be remembered that it has been repeatedly charged that one of the chief flaws in our present system of regulation is the opportunity offered the unregulated holding companies to milk the operating companies and hence the public, by swollen engineering and management charges. We quote, therefore:

> Another activity of which we do not approve, especially at this time of the Federal Trade Commission investigation, is the activity of this accounting department in seeking definite information concerning charges by our engineers and management concerns for services billed such subsidiary companies as hold licenses for the construction of Federal power projects. The new rules of practice and procedure of the commission recently adopted provide for the making public of reports of the commission's examiners of all accounts.

The memorandum attributes the adoption of the accounting practices complained of to the Chief Accountant of the Commission, William V. King, in whose appointment, it declares, "we were not so fortunate." Mr. King came direct from the Interstate Commerce Commission and knew how to apply the law. As a remedy, "We have made representations to the Water Power Development Committee of the United States Chamber of Commerce that this accounting work could be better done by the Departments of War, Interior and Agriculture than by the Commission's staff directly. If this committee is successful in presenting this argument to the Secretaries who form the commission . . . it is believed that these departments will not have men specially trained for this work. At least they will be removed from the direct supervision of Mr. King." Better to turn the work over to untrained men than to fight out the issue in open hearings!

There are other interesting matters in the memorandum, which show a lively concern with appointments to the Commission's staff and with removals from it. Into these we shall not go at the moment.

It is a matter for congratulation that, subsequent to the publication of this memorandum, the solicitor of the Commission has reported that Mr. King's regulation on the figuring of depreciation is in accordance with the law, and the Cabinet Members who make up the Commission are understood to have indicated their support of Mr. King. Nevertheless, in view of the recent resignation of the very able Executive Secretary of the Commission, Mr. O. C. Merrill, to take a highly lucrative job in the power industry, and the fact that he is understood to have nominated his own successor, Mr. Frank E. Bonner, it will not do to take our eyes off the Commission for a while yet. Indeed, Congress ought diligently to inquire how that highly important body may be further strengthened and safeguarded.

If this memorandum is genuine, as there is strong external and internal evidence that it is, what more damaging exposure of the cynical attitude and dangerous activities of the industry under its present leadership could be imagined?

Labor and the Empire

IN THE days of the Asquith government it was customary to say that British liberalism stopped at the water's edge. It was a liberal government that, unknown to Parliament, created a diplomatic situation which forced Britain into the World War. As far as colonial matters were concerned, there was little difference between liberals and conservatives. Today the Labor party stands triumphant over liberalism. And critics are already asking whether this is a triumph of principles or of opportunity. They wonder whether the Labor party will merely work to advance the material interests of the British worker, just as the Conservatives worked to advance the interests of the British capitalist class; or whether this party will really become the disinterested instrument of a social philosophy which looks to the establish-

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ment of a world in which every class and race will have full opportunity for development. The apparent unwillingness of the MacDonald government to scrap even the older cruisers in H. M. navy, the firm, if not belligerent stand, of Philip Snowden at the Hague reparations conference, show that the present government, even if "socialistic," thoroughly believes in safeguarding the prestige and the international position of the British Empire.

It is, we believe, in matters of Imperial policy that the real test of the Labor government will come. Will the British trade unionists demand the ruthless exploitation of the tropics in order to help the unemployment situation at home? Will the "political" socialists allow outworn considerations of strategy and imperial prestige to affect British policy toward the demands of Egypt, India, and other parts of the empire for independence and home rule? In South Africa the Labor party, a white man's organization, is the foremost supporter of color-bar and other restrictive native legislation. Is the British Labor party likewise to become the advocate of a narrowly conceived class and racial interest?

As an opposition party, British labor made many fine declarations attacking militarism, nationalism, and imperialism. Soviet Russia, in its beginnings, made similar declarations. But today we find Soviet Russia threatening to launch a war upon China in defense of railway rights torn from China by the imperialistic Tsarist regime. The proof of the Labor party lies not in its sermonizing, but in its acts.

In its proposed solution of the Egyptian problem, summarized in these columns several weeks ago, the MacDonald government has somewhat timidly met the challenge. It is willing to grant Egypt its independence, subject to the right of Britain to police the Suez Canal zone and to an alliance under which Egyptian territory will be put at the disposal of the British military command in time of war. The key to British policy in Egypt has been the Suez Canal just as the key to American policy in the Caribbean has been the Panama Canal. It is a striking fact, however, that while the United States has become more and more aggressive in the Caribbean, as illustrated by its interventions in Haiti, Santo Domingo and Nicaragua, the British government has gradually relinquished control over Egypt. The protectorate of 1914 gave way to qualified independence in 1922. The proposed Anglo-Egyptian alliance carries the process a step further; and the operation of this alliance is subordinate to the provisions in the League Covenant. In theory, at least, under the new proposals the future acts of Great Britain will be subject to review by the League of Nations. This stands in contrast to the policy of the United States, which declines to accept any form of international responsibility for its acts in the Caribbean.

Nevertheless, the Labor proposals to Egypt concede little more than the last Conservative government was willing to concede. British critics have railed against the French alliances with central Europe on the ground that they violate the spirit if not the letter of he Covenant. And now the Labor government believes that an alliance is necessary to protect Imperial interests in the Middle East! Under a real League of Nations the protection of all such arteries as the Suez and Panama Canals should be entrusted to an international authority. The Egyptian proposals may satisfy a temporary situation; but if the Labor government sincerely desires to improve the position of the League, sooner or later it will agree to abolish the special military situation of Britain in Egypt, in favor of a system of real international guarantees.

Such a step would greatly strengthen the sentiment in the United States in favor of some form of coöperative control over the Caribbean. The present exclusive intervention policy of the United States has been repeatedly defended on the ground that it is identical with British policy in Egypt. If Great Britain, a member of the League, can dominate Egypt for strategic reasons, the United States which is not a League member, has even stronger justification for similarly dominating the Caribbean. The real internationalization of British policy in Egypt might, therefore, have a pronounced effect upon the Caribbean policy of the United States.

Another imperial problem of gravity, which the Labor government must attempt to solve, is the status of India. Within a few months the Simon commission will bring in recommendations as to the extension of the system of partial self-government established in the Diarchy Act of 1919. In refusing to appoint any Indian members to the Simon commission, the Baldwin government needlessly irritated native leaders, and the work of the Simon commission has, therefore, been confronted by an Indian boycott and other difficulties. Last August the minimum demands of India were formulated in the Nehru-Sapru draft constitution. This document calls for full Dominion status. And the All-India National Congress has adopted a resolution proposed by Mahatma Gandhi in favor of "civil disobedience" in case the British Parliament fails to adopt the Nehru report by the end of 1929. This draft constitution was brought forward as an answer to those critics who declared that the Indian leaders were merely destructive. From the standpoint of Indian nationalism it is discouraging to find that the Nehru constitution has been repudiated by virtually all the Moslems, and that another attempt to unite the Moslems and Hindus has apparently failed. This failure has not made the Indian leaders any more friendly toward British rule. On the contrary, the destructive forces in India seem to be growing. Within the last few months, a British police officer has been murdered in Lahore, endless strikes have taken place in Calcutta and Bombay, the Legislative Assembly at Delhi has been bombed, and the All-India Youth Conference has poured out inflammatory propa-

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ganda. The sentiment toward immediate and complete independence by revolutionary means is frequently expressed.

Much of this extremism is due to the belief that the British government is not prepared to meet the Indians even half way. Indian leaders feared that the Baldwin government stood for settlement by dictation, instead of settlement by agreement. The advent of the Labor government has to a certain extent relieved the tension. A constructive proposal has come from Mrs. Annie Besant to the effect that the Joint Parliamentary Committee which, along with a committee of Indians, is to pass upon the Simon report, should consider not only the Simon report, but also the proposed Nehru constitution. Such a method would make possible settlement by agreement, which is the only kind of settlement that can really work.

Finally, the Ramsay MacDonald government must face the problem of East Africa. Its decision as to the policy to be followed in the colony of Kenya and the mandate of Tanganyika may determine the future of the African continent as a whole. The white communities are demanding the establishment of a Dominion of East Africa, similar to the dominion in the south. The difficulty in granting this demand, which in certain respects is similar to those once made by the settlers in the American colonies and the British dominions, is that in East Africa there are about 12,000,000 natives. The establishment of an East Africa Dominion would mean that the welfare of the non-European races—both native and Indian—would be turned over to a tiny minority of whites. The difficulty is increased by the fact that these whites depend for their economic existence upon native labor and native land. The Kenya government has now set aside native reserves which cannot be alienated to white settlers. But these reserves are already inadequate for native needs. The percentage of adult natives away from their homes and at work for European enterprise is greater in Kenya than in any part of Africa north of the Zambesi. Whether by direct or indirect means, these natives have been literally obliged to work for the European. As a result, social and tribal disintegration has already commenced. Any measure granting European self-government in East Africa will simply increase the disabilities which already bear so heavily upon the native population.

The Baldwin government sent out to East Africa a commission headed by Sir Hilton Young to make recommendations in regard to an East African federation. In its report which was published early this year, the commission asserted strongly that the interests of the natives should be respected and that their rights to labor, land and tribal development should be guaranteed. It did not believe that the local white population could be trusted to respect these rights without some form of continuous Imperial control and for that reason the Commission declared that self-government for Kenya was out of the question. This report stirred up a furore in Kenya and it met with a cold reception from the Tory government. Its fate depends upon the attitude of the Labor administration. What its attitude will be may be conjectured from the fact that only this July, the government accepted an amendment forbidding the employment of forced labor or of children under twelve in connection with financial advances to British colonies made under the new Colonial Development Act. But it is still necessary in East Africa, at least, to establish machinery such as the Young report recommends, so that the principle of Trusteeship may be really applied. All those interested in the future of Africa and in the protection of the native races should hope that the Hilton Young report will be adopted.

In judging the acts of the MacDonald government relative to imperial policy, it is necessary to remember that the welfare of the British people to a large extent depends upon maintaining trade with other parts of the Empire. It is perfectly natural that a Labor government should wish to safeguard these interests. It is also necessary to remember that there are many parts of the Empire such as Central Africa and the Far Eastern colonies where self-government is out of the question for many generations, and that even in such advanced areas as India and Egypt, there are serious obstacles to immediate and complete independence. Nevertheless, what the liberal opinion throughout the world may reasonably ask from the MacDonald government is that it will adopt a program which will definitely prepare these peoples to stand upon their own feet, that it will show toward them a measure of sympathy and generosity lacking in previous regimes, and that it will throw off the timidity of the past in giving the colored peoples of the Empire a real opportunity to profit from their own, and not from British, mistakes. During the last half century, the British Empire marvellously succeeded in readjusting, upon a democratic basis, the relations of the white Dominions to the mother country. The task of the future will be that of meeting the legitimate aspirations of the colored races.

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Do Manufacturers Need "Relief"?

WHEN the House of Representatives passes a tariff bill that would raise hundreds of duties and would place the tariff at the highest point in our 140 years of national existence, it is reasonable to suppose that the supporters of the bill believe that the business of the country, especially the manufacturing part of it, is threatened with a grave crisis which demands vigorous action by the government. And yet in the same month that the bill was passed by the House, industrial production was higher than ever before in the country's history; shipments of iron ore were larger than in any recent May; the production of pig iron attained a new record, exceeding for the first time the output of May and June, 1923; and the production of steel ingots and coke also made new records. So little did investors lack confidence in the future of business that the average price of 338 industrial stocks was 95 percent above the average of 1926. This level was maintained despite the fact that the offerings of new corporate securities (exclusive of refunding issues) totaled nearly a billion dollars, the largest ever recorded for one month. In view of these facts, it is worth asking what evidence there is that business needs a general increase in duties, particularly in duties on manufactured goods.

American manufacturers have always based their demand for protection upon the fact that they must pay wages far above the European levels. In view of this, it is extraordinary that the demand for a still higher tariff should come at the close of a period which the Committee on Recent Economic Changes believes has shown an unprecedented increase in productivity per man-hour. As a result of labor's growing productivity, American manufacturers were able to get along with over 400,000 fewer men in 1927 than in 1923 and to reduce their wage bill by nearly $160,000,000. In the meantime, the value of factory output increased by over two billions. The consequence was that the wage bill dropped from 18.2 percent to 17.3 percent of the gross value of factory product.

It may be replied, however, that lower labor costs have been achieved partly by use of more machines and power, because between 1923 and 1927 the installed primary horsepower per factory worker increased from 3.8 to 4.7. Machines and power, of course, involve extra costs, both overhead and direct. Possibly, therefore, the manufacturer is really little better off; perhaps he has simply exchanged labor costs for machine and power costs.

Unfortunately it is not possible to trace the trend of machine and power costs. But there is evidence that industry has made substantial savings by using less labor and more machines and power. One important piece of evidence is its ability to attract capital. In 1928, the new security issues—exclusive of refunding issues—of American manufacturing and mining corporations reached a new record: $1,453,200,000, or 16 percent above 1923. Especially significant is the fact that, whereas in 1923 manufacturing and mining enterprises raised only 34 percent of their new capital by common stock, in 1928 they were able to obtain over two-thirds of it by common stock issues.

Still more important is the record of profits. Between 1923 and 1925, the profits of a group of 403 manufacturing and mining corporations increased 29 percent. Between 1925 and 1928, the profits of a larger group (574 in all) increased 27 percent, to a new high record. This makes a gain of nearly 64 percent between 1923 and 1928. The National City Bank reports that the earnings of 375 industrial corporations during the first quarter of 1929 were 37 percent above the corresponding period in 1928. "Many concerns," says the Bank in its July review of business, "have in six months made more profits than in the year 1928." Surely here is no evidence that manufacturers need "relief."

II

But is American business holding its own in competition with other countries? Is our own market being dangerously invaded? What has been happening to our exports? Are we losing or gaining in the battle for the world's trade? Possibly here we shall discover evidence that American business needs more protection.

Let us consider first the totals of our foreign trade. In 1928, the value of our imports was less than in any year since 1924. In 1926, it was $4,431 millions; in 1927, $4,185 millions; and in 1928, $4,091 millions—a drop of 9 percent in two years. No indication of a foreign threat here. Our exports, on the other hand, were greater than in any year since 1920. They were more than one-third above 1922, and nearly 7 percent above 1926. Nor has this substantial growth been merely a matter of larger automobile sales, as some people erroneously think. As a matter of fact, automobiles and accessories were only 8.2 percent of our total exports in 1927. We export substantially more machinery than automobiles.

But let us analyze our exports and imports of manufactured goods. The United States is now predominantly a manufacturing nation because,

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some time between 1910 and 1920, the number of factory workers passed the number of farmers and farm workers. Now two million more people here make a living by manufacturing than by farming. Furthermore, it is the manufacturers for whom the House bill was primarily drafted. Perhaps American manufacturers are being sorely pressed by foreign competition.

Our imports of manufactured goods (including semi-manufactured goods) are remaining substantially stationary in value. In 1923, they were $2,022 millions; in 1928, $2,079 millions, a growth of less than 3 percent. The sales of General Motors Corporation alone during 1928 were three-quarters as large as the total imports of manufactured goods by the whole United States during that year. That is how seriously foreign manufacturers menace our markets. The total value of manufactures imported by the United States is less than 3.4 percent of our total domestic consumption of manufactured goods. In other words, the United States market is 96.6 percent supplied by domestic manufacturers. Back in 1914, it was 95.8 percent so supplied. That is how much progress the foreign manufacturer is making in our home market!

Our exports of manufactured goods, on the other hand, have been growing rapidly. In 1923, they were $2,625 millions; in 1928, $3,687 millions, a gain of 39 percent. Particularly significant are the changes in our imports and exports of finished manufactures other than foodstuffs, because these, more than figures on semi-manufactured goods or manufactures of foodstuffs, indicate the competitive strength of American factories. During the last several years, our imports of finished manufactures have been diminishing and our exports increasing. Between 1926 and 1928, the decrease in the imports was nearly 9 percent and the increase in the exports nearly 16 percent. In 1923, our exports of finished manufactures were nearly twice our imports; in 1928, the ratio was nearly three dollars of exports to one of imports.

III

But is America holding its own in comparison with other countries? Our principal rivals in international trade are the United Kingdom and Germany. Let us compare the growth of our exports with the growth of theirs:

Year	*Domestic exports in millions of dollars*		
	United States	United Kingdom	Germany
1913	$2,448	$2,556	$2,405
1927	4,759	3,447	2,428

Back before the war, it will be observed, the three countries stood about at a parity. Now the United States towers far above the other two with an export trade nearly twice that of Germany and more than one-third above that of the United Kingdom. When account is taken of the change in the price level between 1913 and 1927, it is evident that Germany's exports have diminished in physical volume and that those of the United Kingdom have increased very little. Only the United States has made a substantial gain in both the value and the physical volume of its exports.

But possibly the competing power of America is shown most clearly by our ability to hold our own with Europe in the markets of Australia, Asia, and Latin-America. The percentage of imports purchased from the United States has increased as follows:

	1913	1926
Australia	14.0%	24.6%
Asia		
China	6.0%	16.4%
India	2.5%	7.4%
Japan	16.8%	28.6%
Latin-America		
Argentine	14.7%	25.5%
Brazil	15.7%	29.3%
Chile	16.7%	32.7%
Cuba	53.7%	62.3%
Mexico	50.6%	70.5%

In every instance, our share of the trade has substantially grown; in two cases it has more than doubled, and in several more it has almost doubled. Even in the very strongholds of our competitors, in Great Britain, Germany, France, and Italy themselves, we have increased our share of the import trade. In Great Britain, our share of imports grew from 18.4 percent in 1913 to 18.5 in 1926; in Germany, from 15.9 to 16.1; in France, from 10.6 to 13.3; and in Italy, from 14.4 to 21.7.

IV

Here then in brief is the situation of American manufacturing: labor costs shrinking, physical output greater than ever, profits higher than ever, the home market already nearly 97 percent in the hands of domestic manufacturers, exports increasing rapidly, especially the exports of finished manufactures, imports (especially imports of finished manufactures) decreasing in value during the last several years, our share in the export trade of the world greater than ever. Surely this situation justifies no general upward revision of the tariff.

Undoubtedly the consumer's interest in what happens to the duties on manufactured goods is much less than is usually assumed, for he has already been pretty completely deprived of the opportunity to buy foreign manufactures. The greatest sufferers from a higher tariff on manufactured goods are likely to be the manufacturers themselves and their employees. If American business men were less provincially minded, if they were in the habit of paying more attention to exports and less to imports, this would be apparent

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to them. Our exports of manufactured goods are 68 percent more than our imports and they are growing rapidly, whereas our imports are remaining practically stationary. As far as manufactured goods are concerned, our markets at the present time are already practically closed to the rest of the world. American manufacturers, in consequence, have a far greater interest in keeping foreign markets open to their products than in still further closing a market which is already 97 percent closed. In order to shut off an insignificant trickle of foreign manufactures, is it good business for American manufacturers to jeopardize their rapidly growing export trade? Before the present tariff bill was introduced, the prospect for a continued increase in our exports was probably as favorable as at any time in the country's history. The House bill, however, has radically changed the situation. It has aroused as widespread and as determined an opposition to our trade as any nation has had to face. Most certainly a general upward tariff revision would substantially handicap every American manufacturer in pushing his sales abroad. A presidential veto would be merely a kindness to business.

SUMNER H. SLICHTER.

The Child Stylites of Baltimore

An "Obscene Spectacle" in Mr. Mencken's Own Bailiwick, the Free State of Maryland

THE scene is almost any of some score of vacant lots and glaring backyards in the meaner sections of Baltimore. Your attention is at first attracted by the inevitable milling throng of small boys who crowd about celebrities and events of importance. This time the center of their concern is a strange coop-like arrangement set on the top of a pole some fifteen or twenty feet high. The pole is kept under control by guy wires from which hang the American flag, electric lights, signs advising you to patronize the pharmacy at the corner or to inform you that Jimmy Jones, twelve, has been "sitting" for eight days.

You then observe that the coop—or it may be a platform covered by an umbrella—is occupied by a small boy (or girl) who ought to be in bed, if you see him by night, or at play, if you see him by day—and you are informed that he (or she) has remained on top of the pole, through the painful Baltimore heat, the fierce summer storms and despite the persecution of mosquitoes, for as much as a week. You are gazing, in other words, upon one of the several contenders for the Juvenile Flagpole Sitting Championship of the World, a contest which is distinguished for a unique fervor on the part of the children, but fully as much for a lamentable imbecility on the part of their parents. Even while you are staring at one of these infant St. Simons, you observe that his "manager" is considerably older. You may perhaps see an officious-looking person gravely inspecting the sitter's equipment, and, if you inspect the autograph album at the foot of the pole, you may be fortunate enough to see, in the position assigned to Abou Ben Adhem, the name of His Honor, William F. Broening, Mayor of Baltimore!

It all started when, a few weeks ago, a curious fellow known as Shipwreck Kelly, who goes about from city to city demonstrating the hardihood of the American posterior by sitting for extended periods on flagpoles, visited the conservative city of Baltimore and "put on a sitting." During his protracted stay aloft, which was long enough to break the world's record for this particular form of virtuosity, Shipwreck attracted large crowds to the park which was the scene of his effort, and the celebration attending his eventual descent was a demonstration of the ease with which almost any form of imbecility becomes important in these States. Inevitably there was a juvenile aspirant to Shipwreck's fame. Boys from time immemorial have wanted to be locomotive engineers, bareback riders, and major generals. Their heroes are, quite naturally, those who cause the most excitement. It was no great surprise, therefore, when one read in the Baltimore newspapers the modest announcement that Avon Foreman, fifteen, had mounted a flagpole and would sit there until he had broken what might be considered the "juvenile record." When he had sat for ten days, ten hours, ten minutes and ten seconds, he decided that the "juvenile record" in this field had been broken, and he came down.

That might have ended the matter had not various people, no longer accounted children, behaved so preposterously. "The older Baltimore" could hardly believe its ears when it learned the details of the hullabaloo following Avon's descent. For days before this amazing event crowds had gathered nightly to see him perched on his platform upon which bright searchlights had been trained by his father, who is an electrician. When Avon decided that his "record" was safe, there was a neighborhood celebration at which Mayor Broening, for whom no occasion lacks its oratorical op-

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portunities, made an address and presented to Avon an autographed testimonial bearing the great seal of Baltimore City. In the course of his remarks the Mayor described Avon's achievement as an exemplification of "the pioneer spirit of early America." It is quite likely His Honor believed it, but it is equally possible that he was merely making a speech. When two or three people are gathered together Mayor Broening makes a speech, and most of his speeches are much the same.

Whatever these occasional remarks meant to the Mayor, they were a Challenge to the Youth of Baltimore. From that moment Baltimore was dotted with boys and girls ranging from eight to thirteen years of age who were determined to upset Avon Foreman's record as a flagpole sitter. Some of them came down as soon as Father got home, but since the ceremonies attending the Avon Foreman descent from a flagpole, there has been an average of some fifteen children roosting in various contrivances atop "flagpoles" ranging from ten to twenty feet high. Two of them have broken legs and one an arm, and one little girl was ill for days from the effects of her experience, but others mount poles to replace the casualties and the sittings go on. Parents, who at first were inclined to forbid their youngsters to enter the lists, lend their aid and provide their offspring with such comforts as are possible on top of a pole. It is difficult to make out a case against a practice which the Mayor of a city of 750,000 people has sanctioned as an exhibition of "grit and stamina so essential to success in the great struggle of life."

Editors in Baltimore and elsewhere promptly suggested a quick mobilization of shingles, hairbrushes, straps and slippers as a means of breaking this children's crusade under the banner of St. Simon Stylites. As a matter of fact, however, the children seem sages in comparison with the imbecility of their elders. When a boy, through the simple expedient of installing himself in a coop at the end of a pole can bring the Mayor to call on him, cause a minister of the Gospel to hold services with sermon at the foot of the pole and be the central occasion for a brass band, scores of popcorn vendors, offers of free dentistry for a year and a "write-up" in the newspapers, parental authority—in the class mainly afflicted with this mania—avails very little. Indeed, the parents of most of these children exhibit a distinct pride in the performance, protected by ignorance and stupidity from appreciating the possible consequences, physical and otherwise, of these idiotic vigils. They rival one another in fitting out the child's flagpole equipment with electric lights and, occasionally, a radio set! The corner druggist pays a dollar or two for the right to advertise his business on the sacred totem and the city officials, perhaps in an effort to restrain the epidemic, add importance to flagpole sitting by solemnly issuing specifications for flagpoles for this use and charging a license fee of one dollar! If stripes could cure this malady, other backs than those of the children might appropriately receive them.

Moralists, in the larger sense, have an opportunity for prolonged and depressing speculation as to the essential significance of the Baltimore phenomenon. They can meditate upon the dullness of lives which find relief in the spectacle of twenty children squatting on top of improvised flagpoles throughout the city; on the low estimate a skillful politician with further ambitions must have made of his fellow citizens before he decided to take up these Stylites in a serious way; on the vacuity of adults who wear collars and own automobiles and permit their children to astound the neighbors in this fashion; on the strange evolution which makes an outbreak of this sort, to be expected in Los Angeles, possible in a conservative city like Baltimore. Consider the smugness installed in the soul of the youngster who mounted his flagpole with a Bible and thus provided the occasion for a religious service! Reflect on the precedent established for sound civil service by a city engineering department announcing without a smile the accepted specifications for a pole to be sat on! Imagine your own child——! Or your own Mayor, which may be less fantastic. Business is still transacted in Baltimore, but, as the flagpole story (with pictures) is bruited about from city to city, the people who matter become slightly embarrassed. A hell of a thing for the second port on the Atlantic seaboard!

In view of the excitement just south of Baltimore over the various manifestations of Negro ambition, one of the flagpole sitters provides disquieting material for the believers in White supremacy. A Negro boy took up flagpole sitting and contributed his "grit and stamina" to the prevailing "pioneer spirit" now rampant. Be it noted, however, that he, above all the squatters, had the ordinary sense to come down from his perch at night—and for all meals.

FREDERIC NELSON.

Baltimore, Md.

The Word

God's accent was confused when first he spoke.
Was perfectness a thing to talk about?
Should he break the hush with laughter at a joke?
Should he whisper the Word to man or should he shout?
Should it be multiple, or only one?
Should it be all there is, or all there are?
Was the music of the spheres now to be known
In the narrow accent of a single star.
To his own ears, or to the ears of those
Born to receive the tone of his intent
And prime musicianship? Should it be a rose
Opening in dew? Should it be the firmament?
God's accent was confused on that first day.
He shut his ears. He had no more to say.

WITTER BYNNER.

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Michigan Takes Stock

FIFTY YEARS of reckless timber cutting in the United States have left a third of a billion acres, which once yielded rich forests, lying more or less barren. The Department of Agriculture's figures indicate that over 200,000,000 of these acres are giving no return whatever. In many timber-growing states the abandonment of stump-land farms, which were once the hope of the cut-overs, has long been a serious matter; tax delinquency on logged-off areas has grown alarming; and the tax officers in these commonwealths are scratching their heads for experiments and stop-gaps to make both ends meet.

In short, the nation has on its hands vast sections of idle land, which are either being reluctantly carried by their discouraged owners, or confiscated for the non-payment of taxes—a resort which, needless to say, gives no relief to the treasuries of the counties where the land lies.

The Lake States alone now include 50,000,000 acres which, a generation ago, were covered with forests, but today grow little or nothing of immediate value. About a third of these lie within the boundaries of Michigan, and make up practically a third of the state's area. For a time it was thought that this cut-over section, north of the fertile and prosperous southern counties, might be fit for certain food crops or grazing. There are, in fact, many strips of land scattered through it and along its borders that are worked at a profit; but on most of it even specialized agriculture could not hope to pay, and within recent years tax delinquencies have multiplied. Because of this dropping of millions of acres from the tax rolls, certain political units are already insolvent. Most of Michigan's counties today receive more from the commonwealth in school and highway funds than they pay into the state treasury, and the distress has grown so great that this year's legislature has been asked to provide for the consolidation of counties in poorer districts, so that the cost of administrating local public affairs may be cut down.

This progressive anæmia, which is spreading through all the timber-growing country, means that, if the states involved are to recover their economic vigor, they must find ways of putting idle acres to work at the earliest possible moment. So far, Michigan is the only state that has tackled this problem with a comprehensive plan.

In Michigan, the Department of Conservation is charged with the administration of public land affairs. For years this bureau has been supposed to do whatever could be done with abandoned lands; but, until recently, the Auditor-General had the right to sell tax-delinquent parcels. Many such acres were sold for one purpose or another, and unfortunately a large number fell into the hands of timber scavengers, who took what little second growth had sprung up, and then promptly let the property drift back into state ownership. In 1927, the legislature passed a law prescribing that all land which was five years delinquent should be deeded to the Department of Conservation, and gave this department the sole power to sell, lease, and exchange such land, or to make use of it in any of the projects within the scope of its activity, such as state forests, parks, or game refuges. Thus one bureau now has a free hand in deciding what shall be done with any or all of the public acres in the state.

The chief uses for cut-over forest lands must obviously be either agriculture or the production of more forests. As all hope of seeing much of this soil under the plow vanished, and it became evident that private enterprise was reluctant to embark on reforestation to any great extent, Michigan has gradually realized, within the past ten years, that public initiative alone will put loafing acres to work. The state has now become a leader in reforestation; but, however fast the state forests may be expanded, the work involves only a fraction of the idle lands, and brings no direct return whatever to the impoverished counties where the land is located. Any considerable returns to the state, by the very nature of the undertakings, must be far in the future. But the by-products of the program of re-forestation involve no such wait for income.

Michigan has been a tourist state ever since the nineties, but after the War, when Americans learned to play, when highway construction was extended, and the automobile came into wide use, travelers began to swarm. For a time, these tourists kept to the line of settled communities, but they soon left the main highways and invaded the cut-overs. Thanks to the increasing guard against forest fires, some of these were now thickly enough covered with second growth to offer cool, inviting solitudes. Fishermen, hunters, and rovers increased in the back country. Their coming encouraged many a cross-roads merchant, who had first seen the sawmills go, had then staked his hope on the cut-over farms, and had eventually watched the farms dwindle as one failure after another showed that the land could not be worked at a profit, leaving the unlucky merchant to hang on in a tax-ridden township because his small capital was tied there. The tourist was welcomed as the saviour of the cut-overs. Every acre up-state, it was hoped, would soon be green with forests; and forests, with their

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vistas, fish, bird and animal life, promised recreation, the largest by-product and the first return from reforestation. The tourist was a new crop, a crop that it was piously believed would never fail. Perhaps. But the crop was not yet big enough to solve all the difficulties, and it was too big for the very facilities that had produced it. Intensive fishing and hunting impoverished the supplies of wild life that had lured many of these visitors. The Department of Conservation began to receive complaints, and made scattered efforts to remedy the situation. But as one device after another proved futile, the country grew desperate. At length the idea filtered into the offices at Lansing that the threatened shortage of fish and game was related to the old familiar land problem—was perhaps an important part of it. Something had to be done. But what?

As early as 1919, the Michigan Academy of Science, a group of educators, had foreseen trouble, and had appointed a committee of land economists to make a survey and report back the following year. The committee did its work so well that the state administration, asked to digest its report, complied, and saw the situation for the first time as a whole. The committee's recommendations were adopted, and in 1922 the Michigan Land-Economic Survey was inaugurated as a division of the Department of Conservation.

Funds were appropriated; an adequate technical staff was employed; and coöperation with the United States Bureau of Soils, the Lakes-States Forest Experiment Station, and the Michigan Department of Agriculture, was assured. A year was taken to define the policies and work out methods. Ten counties have now been covered, and the Survey plans to complete its studies and make publications on at least two new counties each year.

"The outstanding difference between this undertaking and any other that approximates it, is in the effort to determine all the factors that will make for the intelligent use of land, to consider all the variables, and to carry on the work with no prejudice for or against the possibly competing utilizations," reported P. S. Lovejoy, who was the first in charge. The Survey, in short, is an inventory, and its findings are so complete that classification and planning are simple after its results have been studied.

The field work has three main aspects: the first is concerned with civil-base data—the topography of the country, the types of growth covering it, and its possible uses; the second, with soils; the third, with land and related economics.

The civil-base map gives full details with particular attention to the question of improvements. Topography has five classifications, from level to broken. Cover is recorded under nearly fifty classifications, ranging from marshes and bald blueberry "plains" to marketable second-growth pine and virgin hardwoods, all grouped by species combinations, three-inch diameter variations, and the density of stands. The Survey also makes growth studies which, taken with the reports of the chief Forest Fire Warden and the county agricultural agents, will make it possible to keep the inventory of cover always up to date.

Biologists helped in planning the forest classifications, so that the various cover types are related to their wild life. The conditions under which the chief species live are studied where possible, so that these may be assured a maximum bird and mammal population.

In the lakes—and Michigan has thousands—the possibilities for fish are canvassed, and a record is made of all river systems. This gives the Department material on which to base cultural and restocking plans, so that not only the various game fishes but the visiting fishermen may approach happiness.

Cultivated areas are divided into worked land, pasture, and abandoned farms. A tally of the principal crops is kept, which makes it possible to determine the percentage of any county's production, represented by each field crop; this, in turn, compared with the county's exports, gives a remarkably accurate idea of the results of different agricultural methods as related to each type of soil.

The soil surveyors map each typical area. With this, having a record of type development in nearby localities and the economic inventories of the Survey, the state need not become involved in debates over official classifications of any specific parcel of privately owned land.

The Survey's men cover the ground so thoroughly that no variations of more than ten acres can escape record. Besides those mentioned, there are many other details of physical investigation, such as water-power resources, wild life tallies, the location and commercial possibilities of marls, stones, underground water, and so on.

The third phase of the field work is the "binder" in the mixture. To quote from the current report of L. R. Schoenmann, now in charge:

> The purpose of the economic inventory is to aid in obtaining a clearer understanding of the problems that must be confronted in planning better utilization of the county's resources. To reach that objective the land economist is faced by two diverging trends in study; first, the necessity of reducing his findings to a set of common denominators that will allow comparisons to be made between areas unlike in nature, stage of development, and condition of their resources; and second, to explore for new facts and new evidence to aid in defining our land problems. Methods that have proved most helpful follow:
>
> 1. Intent in Land Ownership Study: to show where and how much land is owned for farming, recreation, timber, speculation, etc.
>
> 2. Assessed Valuation Study: to show local appreciation of the value of different land types and the proportion of taxable wealth represented in each class of intent in land ownership.
>
> 3. Tax Delinquency Study: to determine types on which tax delinquency is common and persistent and on which it is rare or unknown.

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4. Trade Area Study: to determine the limits of the area that is serving or is served by each trading center.

5. Production Study: to determine the nature and volume of the county's business and production.

Correlating these studies with soil and farm-forest maps has brought a clearer understanding of idle land, farm abandonment and tax delinquency problems. In some instances it has pointed the way to more advantageous future land use and in others it has strongly commended the present utilization for farms, forests and recreation.

Early in the history of the Survey, certain conclusions became evident: the character of the soils and the successful use of land are intimately related, and results can be anticipated; a comparison of the soil maps with the assessors' valuations indicates that local experience has established a fair estimate of the relative values of different types of soil; pleasure resorts may bring more revenue to the county than much larger areas of lean soil under cultivation; and the abandonment and reversion of land may be forecasted.

It is no longer necessary for the owner of these raw tracts of land to try out various uses, hit or miss, for his property. He need not even be on the ground. Sitting in Timbuktu, equipped with the Survey's findings, he can see at a glance both the nature and the possible use of any ten acres. Is land of similar topography and soil being cultivated to advantage elsewhere? The Survey's reports will tell him where and how, and will help him to decide whether it is worth while to continue paying taxes on his own. Or, if he has already made unsuccessful attempts to farm his land, these same reports may put him on the right track. If he is thinking of a summer home or a hunting lodge, he can see all the possibilities of his tract in his mind's eye, down to the fish he will catch, if luck is with him, or the birds and animals he may pursue.

From the point of view of the state, if it is foresighted, the Survey can also be of great use. It may be estimated that a certain block of reverted land is due to fill up in so many years, judging from the class of owner and the types of soil and cover indicated. Perhaps it would be better to take this for another state forest, which may serve as a camping place for tourists while producing a second timber crop. If so, how much hand planting will it need and when? Can the state forest nursery fill its needs without embarrassment, or must plans be made now for this added drain on the seed beds? Or is the tract more adapted for a game refuge? Or a future state park? What does the Chief Forest Fire Warden see in it that may cause him to give the place special attention?

Perhaps the state has received an application to buy certain isolated sections for a hunting club. Do the surroundings and the history of this type of land indicate that it would be better to hold the tract for some big-scale public project which will attract garages, stores, and rooming-houses, to add to local taxable property, or is it better to sell now and have the land back on the township tax rolls at once?

Suppose that a subdivider sold a certain number of lots on this lake last year. What does this increase in fishermen forecast for the head of the Fish Division? Can he keep up an adequate supply? Good fishing will be highly important to the sale of more lots, and the consequent creation of more taxation resources. This is the locality where muck land was discovered, worthless when the neighborhood was unpopulated, but worked profitably since the cottagers have come. There is more such land nearby, which will be improved and will yield more taxes if the resort colony grows.

Scotching fraudulent land schemes has been greatly simplified by the activities of the Survey. The working of Michigan's timberland tax law, an experiment in encouraging private reforestation, will be made smoother by the information that is now becoming available. Paper manufacturers, by using the growth studies and reports of total areas classified according to age and density of stand, may know how much of this and that should be standing in any given county at any given time. And so on.

This information as to just what outdoor wealth Michigan has is coming none too soon. In January, 1928, the Department of Conservation had title to 1,073,523 acres; in January, 1929, the total was 1,418,884, with another quarter of a million going through the Auditor-General's books and no one knows what additional amount piling up in the records.

The idle land problem grows, but Michigan has the machinery to meet it. This is the first real attempt in America at state planning, and it has been begun on such a comprehensive scale and such a practical basis that it already promises to be of incalculable value.

HAROLD TITUS.

Magazines for Morons

A WOOD-PULP magazine is one of the most diluted forms of pabulum obtainable in America. It is just a half-rung below the average Hollywood movie. For that reason it is, aside from the newspaper, the favorite reading matter of a huge proportion of the reading public.

The newsstands are cluttered with wood-pulp magazines. They can be roughly divided into three main classes, according to subject matter: Adventure—including Western, air, war, sport, sea stories, and so on; Mystery, which although referring particularly to detective and crime yarns, can be stretched to include ghost stories and the like; and Love, with that half-sister on the left, the "confession" magazine.

Until recently Western stories led the field, but air stories are now enjoying a greater popularity.

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Most writers and editors, however, believe that this vogue will not last. The Western is still the safe bet, the hardy perennial, and there are more magazines of Westerns than of any other single type. The leader in the field had, when last I heard, a circulation that hovered around six hundred thousand a week. That is the biggest circulation of which I know; the average is about two hundred thousand an issue. The magazine that sells less than seventy-five thousand is a failure and doomed to early oblivion. No lame ducks are carried.

Results must show with the first number. I worked on one failure. The first two issues averaged only fifty thousand copies each. The magazine was a fortnightly publication; it died after its sixth appearance.

Wood-pulp literature caters exclusively to the adolescent mind. The first editor I worked under told me on the first day of my editorial career: "Always remember that we are getting out a magazine for The Great American Moron!"

Since the stories are edited for mental children and persons suffering from arrested development, they are kept strictly moral in tone. However invidious they may be in suggestion, however harmful the influence of the unreal world they depict and the phantasies they foster, their surface is almost repulsively virtuous.

The editorial neophyte in one office is required to read and learn a page of instructions that contain such mandates as these:

> Omit the words "blood" and "bloody." These have unpleasant connotations. Substitute "gore" and "crimson stain" where possible.
>
> Do not allow any swearing. Substitute "darn" and similar expressions for stronger words.
>
> Omit all allusions to "heaving bosoms," and other unpleasant sex references.

With a chart like that, who could go wrong? The stories of rarin' he-men are, when properly edited, as mild and ladylike as the most straitlaced clergyman could wish. And speaking of clergymen, there is one illustrious publishing house—it puts out confession stories of the sexiest type—which employs a minister to read all the stories; he certifies their morality in a neat little note on the title page.

But to return to my own experience. Occasionally, the stories become too genteel for the tastes of their writers. I remember one yarn, laid in a Western saloon which the virile author had decorated with cuspidors. These seemed improper to the lady who edited the copy, and pretty wire wastebaskets were substituted for the dirty spittoons. The letter in which the author expressed his opinion of the change could never have been printed in the magazine. Somewhat similar was the reaction of the writer whose hero was made to rise from the floor after a knock-down blow, wipe his brow, and exclaim: "Goodness gracious!"

Once a benighted editor accepted a story and published it. In one incident the young hero was escorting the heroine along a narrow street when they chanced to pass a house gay with lights and music.

"Ah, Harold," said the maid, "let us go in and revel with these people!" Or words to that effect.

After modest expostulations, which failed to shake the lady's determination, the hero, with many blushes, explained that the house was one unfit for her to enter, and he used the fatal word "brothel." The editor who allowed that story to sully sacred pages was promptly fired.

The stories themselves—I am speaking now of Westerns—usually consist of frantic chases and violent fights, and they end, in the good old Sunday-school manner, with virtue triumphant. The woman interest in the Westerns is almost non-existent and without sex coloring. The heroine is simply the prize awarded the hero, along with the ranch of his dreams, at the end of the story.

I once heard an associate editor remonstrating with an author about the lack of plot in a yarn he had concocted. "But, Mr. F——," she said, "you simply have your hero ride up the hill. Tagallop! Tagallop! Tagallop! Fire off his pistol—bang! And ride down the hill. Tagallop! Tagallop! Tagallop!" That nicely describes nine out of ten westerns.

Love stories, too, have their conventions. These tales are written from the girl's viewpoint, and the heroine is the crux of every story. As a rule she must be small, dainty, and young. Oh, so young! Any girl in a love story who has attained the age of twenty-two and is yet unmarried is either the old-maid sister or the middle-aged vamp from whom the innocent heroine will wrest the hero. If a writer is so misguided as to forget this, his heroine will be promptly rejuvenated. Eighteen is an ideal age—sixteen is nice, too. The hero is as youthful as the heroine and very virile. But both are pure as snow, and their love is all innocence and spring. No guilty passions here.

The erring sisters have their day in the confession stories. There, in the first person, they hold forth with sobs on the subject of the wickedness of males and the sad weakness of females in the face of male attraction. Here, too, virtue is triumphant, but many a forbidden thrill and lascivious detail can be insinuated into the story if given a proper sugar coating of prayerful repentance. These are the yarns that circulate in high schools and other gathering places of the young who seek information as to the forbidden fruit of life. The straight love stories are the refuge of those frustrated in love who drink vicariously at the fountain of enchantment.

The detective stories are the intellectual kings of the wood-pulp realm. One magazine can boast that it was the relaxation of Wilson and Roosevelt; and it now adds Hoover to its list. Perhaps

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this is why detective magazines do not have the biggest circulations. Readers of crime and mystery stories, being of more educated tastes, are likely to buy their entertainment in book form.

The men who write for these various magazines are an interesting lot. Writing, with them, is strictly business, a way of earning a living. There are two or three selling to every periodical, whose stories are always in hock before they are written. The writers receive large advances on forthcoming yarns, and are therefore bound to the firm since they are always in its debt. This works out badly at times, as when a writer turns in inferior material that must be used since it has been paid for.

There are many men writing for the Westerns who have never been west of Pennsylvania; the bloodiest detective stories imaginable are written, under a pen name, by an ordained minister; war stories belong largely to chocolate soldiers who were lisping in kindergartens at the outbreak of the last fracas; and air stories are the meat of gentlemen who have never reached an altitude to which an elevator could not take them. Sometimes, therefore, a slip occurs—as when a villain in one yarn made a parachute leap at an altitude of fifty feet. Such mistakes are the delight of the readers. The wise editor lets one or two get by occasionally because it gives the public such joy to write in to the office correcting the error.

An interesting offshoot of the wood-pulp magazine is the trade paper for writers of wood-pulp fiction. There are a number of these trade papers. They contain success stories by writers who have made good and are selling regularly at high rates, articles on writing methods, and, most important of all, market lists, giving information about the pulp-paper magazines and the rates they pay. The slick-paper periodicals are rarely mentioned, and I have never seen an article in one of these trade papers by a man whose name meant anything outside the realms of wood-pulp fiction.

All writers for wood-pulp magazines must be rapid and prolific. The wordage of many of them is astounding. One man, writing under at least six names, turns out one and one-half million words a year. This means an excellent income, as he receives five cents a word for magazine rights, and draws besides high royalties on those of his yarns published in book form, and fat sums for movie rights. He is, of course, unusual, but even the average writer can make a good living. Ten, fifteen, twenty thousand dollars—such incomes are not too exceptional.

The rates paid vary in the different fields. Westerns pay the highest; two magazines, I know, pay seven cents a word to their most popular writers. Four or five cents a word is not extraordinary.

The other fields average around two cents a word, with three very good, and four as top rate. The confessionals pay, as a rule, the lowest rates of all.

To make good rates possible, huge circulations are necessary. Unlike the higher class periodicals, the wood-pulp magazines do not depend on advertising. Nor do they have large subscription lists. The main income is from newsstand sales. What little advertising is carried is very inferior in grade. Those houses which, like Street and Smith, and the Dell Publishing Company, publish a number of magazines, sell group advertising. That is, the advertiser pays a flat rate and his material is run in every one of the firm's periodicals. This sometimes results in ridiculous incongruities—as when a picture of a brawny giant and a eulogy of so-and-so's muscle builder appear opposite the title page of a magazine called "Cupid's Diary." Or when a simpering recommendation of freckle cream adorns a publication called "Danger Trails."

Publishers have been known to go to great lengths to secure circulation. A few years ago there was a nasty scandal in one of the big distributing companies when it was discovered that an official of the company had been bribed by one firm to keep the publications of a rival firm in the cellars, never placing them on the stands for distribution.

Another ingenuous publisher started business in a small way by ripping the covers off old numbers of another firm's magazines, mixing the contents, and sending them out in new jackets as his own. After some negotiations the matter was settled with at least the appearance of amicability, and today the enterprising young man is doing a thriving business in more legitimate goods.

When one publisher discovers a good thing, all the others rush to copy it. Recent examples of this are in the fields of war and air stories. War stories, by the way, are daintily handled, nothing horrible, you know; humor and good-fellowship, pretty entertainment—that is the idea. The aim is to make the veterans chuckle reminiscently over happy days in the funny old trenches and to inspire the younger generation with longing for the next war when they may have a good time, too. And judging from the letters that pour into the editorial offices, the magazines succeed along both lines.

As a rule, although ruthless with each other, the publishing houses treat the author fairly enough—provided he knows how to safeguard his rights. The favorite policy that works to the detriment of the unsuspecting writer is the buying, not of First American Serial Rights, but of All American Serial Rights. This allows the firm to use the story as often as it likes without further payment. It works with particular viciousness when early works of men grown famous are resurrected to their discredit, because of the value of their names.

The use of a "firm name" is another practice. That is, a nom de plume is chosen and owned by the publishers. "Nick Carter" was one; "Burt L. Standish"—the Frank Merriwell series—another. If the author, after his work becomes popular,

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chooses to ask more money for his yarns, the owners of the name under which he has been writing can cut him off and employ another man to write under the same name. The author has no come-back. Moreover, since he cannot use the name under which he has made his reputation except with the firm that owns it, he is left to build up his public anew—a hard job sometimes.

Despite the generally low standard of wood-pulp literature there are always some editors who rise in anger to defend the artistic reputation of the material they publish. They invoke the names of a few men who, while no longer writing for the wood-pulp magazines, were once connected with them in one way or another. Dreiser is one of these martyrs; H. G. Wells and Sinclair Lewis are others. All did work for Street and Smith some fifteen or twenty years ago. The old Popular Magazine—at that time much better than it is today—ran "Tono Bungay." Dreiser and Lewis served editorially at Street and Smith—and, I have it from those who knew them then, cordially detested the work.

The most recent claim to the title Art lies in the fact that Wetjen was awarded an O. Henry prize for a short story that appeared in Sea Stories. Occasionally a really good story does find its way in, you see. There are even some writers, regulars in the field, whose work can be read by an adult without nausea. But, as a rule, if you find a yarn of genuine literary merit in a wood-pulp magazine—well, it is probably because the author did not know enough to send it elsewhere.

ALVIN BARCLAY.

Washington Notes

PROBABLY it is the heat, but the stories that have recently gone out of Washington concerning the relationship of the administration and the situation in the South seem to me sillier than anything we have had in the nature of Washington correspondence since the Hoover inaugural. The burden of most of the yarns is that the White House is so excitedly interested in the prospect of keeping Republican the four states that went Republican last fall that the new Chairman of the Republican National Committee—Mr. Claudius Huston of Tennessee, who will be chosen September 9—proposes to throw "all the resources at his command" (which is the tactful way of saying he intends to furnish some money) behind the Slemp-Cannon Fusion candidate in Virginia. Moreover, Mr. Hoover himself, it is said, will personally appeal to the people of Virginia to support the administration by electing the Republican candidate for Governor. Further, they say, Mr. Hoover later plans a personal visit to Texas, North Carolina and Florida for the purpose of encouraging those states, which up to 1928 had formed part of the unbreakable Democratic South, to continue in the Republican party, into which under the pious leadership of the pastors, they flopped so enthusiastically last fall.

I say that these stories are silly because it seems incredible to me that either Mr. Hoover or Mr. Huston or anyone else connected with the administration could be so utterly gullible as to believe that with the wet Catholic issue eliminated these Southern states, in a state election, are not going to swing back. I can think of few things more certain. It is, of course, natural enough for the so-called Republican leaders in the South to struggle to hold some of the ground gained. Beyond question there are a considerable number of Democrats who once having broken loose, will continue irregular or independent. Also, some remnants of the passion and prejudice of the 1928 campaign will remain this year and next. But allow for all this. Allow for the fusion of factions as in Virginia. Allow for one or two other things—notably, Republican money. Then double the allowance. The answer is the same: there is no way to hold these states Republican except through the nomination of another wet Catholic Democratic candidate. Every practical man with any sort of political seasoning and any kind of experience in the South knows this to be the bed-rock fact of the situation. Take Virginia, where the forces of Bishop Cannon, that holy and unfortunate investor now in Europe where the slanders of his enemies can't reach him, and the regular Republicans guided by the astute and slippery Slemp have amalgamated behind a college professor for Governor and are preparing to make the wetness and Catholicism of poor Mr. Raskob their main, though under-cover, issue—no really posted person has the least idea that this combination can win. It is, of course, vastly to the personal political interests of Mr. Slemp to hold out such hope, and while I hate to do him an injustice, my belief is that most of the aforementioned stories about Republican prospects in the South generally and in Virginia particularly have been carefully planted by him in spots where the "gentlemen of the press" could not help falling over them.

It is easy to understand that it will be of no little benefit to Mr. Slemp if the Republican National Committee can be induced to back him up financially in Virginia, and of even greater benefit if the Hoover administration can be identified with his fight there. It is more difficult to believe that either Mr. Huston or Mr. Hoover should feel sufficient confidence in the disinterested judgment of Mr. Slemp or be so far deluded by the upset of last year, the causes of which were plain enough for the most complete political dumbbell to grasp, to exert themselves, in between national campaigns, in any such unprecedented way as is suggested by the dispatches. Without being even remotely in their confidence I am quite certain neither Mr. Hoover nor Mr. Huston will do any such thing, and for several very sound reasons. One is because of its obvious futility; another because it would be impossible for Mr. Hoover or Mr. Huston to take anything resembling a personal interest in these fusion fights in the Southern states without laying themselves open to the charge of encouraging religious prejudice in politics, a charge which would unescapably be made, particularly in Virginia, where Bishop Cannon is so conspicuously to the fore and the anti-Raskob cry has already been raised. Still another reason for believing that Mr. Hoover will make no personal visit to any Southern state with a party purpose in mind is that his closest political adviser, Mr. James Francis Burke, of Pitts-

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burgh, takes no stock whatever in the talk of "holding" these Southern states. Mr. Burke sees through the whole business very clearly, recognizes the unnecessary nature of the risks to the administration, and is aware of the extreme selfishness of the local politicians who are trying to drag the President and the National Committee into off-year Gubernatorial and Senatorial fights in which there is practically no chance of coming out with credit.

Speaking of Hoover political advisers (perhaps "agents" is a more accurate word) it is interesting to me that Jimmie Burke should have so completely overshadowed Jimmie Good, to say nothing of Walter Brown and Walter Newton and all others, as the White House politician. It is interesting, too, as demonstrating the accuracy of the Washington correspondents' knowledge of what is in the Hoover mind. When the Cabinet appointments were announced there was complete unanimity of belief among the journalistic gentlemen of high and low degree that Mr. Good and Mr. Brown would handle the politics of the administration. They were, said the boys, picked for that purpose. Not one, so far as I recall, so much as mentioned Jimmie Burke's name, much less forecast the unique position he has come to occupy. As things have developed Mr. Good is Secretary of War and nothing else; Mr. Brown is Postmaster General and nothing else; Mr. Newton is the Presidential Secretary, who keeps in close touch with the numerous bureaus and commissions not directly under a Cabinet officer, and little else. The real politics of the administration, so far as there is any politics, is played by and through Jimmie Burke, the shrewd little Irish Catholic Pittsburgh Republican. Counsel of the National Committee, affiliated in the past with the Mellon interests, both financial and political, practical to the last degree, he is personally devoted to Herbert Hoover and singularly enough, entirely satisfied to be "close" to him without, so far as can be judged, any desire to hold any sort of an official job under him. So far Jimmie, though occupying a most unusual position in the administration, entirely without official title, salary or emoluments, yet playing a large and potent part in affairs, has gotten away with very little publicity. One reason is his popularity with newspaper men. Another is his talent for inconspicuous and unobtrusive activity. Another is that his work for the White House is practically all under cover and of the confidential nature.

In many ways Jimmie is the most interesting of the whole inner Hoover circle—and the most useful. His devotion to Herbert does not prevent him from being personally intimate with a good many who do not remotely share in this devotion—for example, the unfortunate and still grieving Donovan and the elephantine and inept Watson. Of all the men who surround Herbert, Jimmie knows the political language best. There is no other to whom the regular, old-fashioned Republican leader of the Old Guard stripe can talk with complete assurance of being not only understood but sympathized with. Jimmie knows them and they know Jimmie. Through him, more than through anyone else, the Hoover attitude and wishes are transmitted to the Republican Senators and the real leaders of the House. Not only that, but Jimmie is the really active man on that Southern patronage committee named by Herbert some months ago to carry out his idea of making the Republican party organization at least semi-respectable in the states where the custom for years has been to sell the federal offices to the highest bidder. Just what Jimmie has done to carry out the Hoover ideas along this line, announced with so much éclat soon after he was inaugurated, I do not know. Not much, I suspect. It is not because he has not tried, but mostly because very little could be done. If you dig in, it will amaze you how varied and extensive are the activities of Mr. Burke and how successful he is in keeping them under cover. He not only carries the Hoover word to the key Senators and House leaders; he not only is the liaison man between the President and the recognized party leaders in the several states. As the confidential and authorized representative of the President he has, to my personal knowledge, conveyed word of White House desire to railroad presidents, to labor leaders, to potential Ambassadors and to powerful editors.

Whether Jimmie can continue to play the role he has elected and for which he has been designated, in this administration, clear to the end I do not know. It is not an easy one, and too much publicity will make his position untenable. Up to date, however, he has been singularly successful not only in avoiding too much newspaper notice but in keeping out of jams generally. He is a smooth piece of metal, is Jimmie. He is a long way from being the Colonel House of the administration. There isn't any Colonel House. But he is closer to being one than anyone else. He is really the White House politician—and he loves it. It is a pleasure to watch him work, and I feel a little guilty writing all this about him because it is bound to cramp his style, to some extent at least.

T. R. B.

Washington.

The Harp Player

EVEN BEFORE I leave the post road along the line of stone posts, covered with ivy, where the park lights are, and come to the edge of the cliffs above the sunken gardens, I can hear the harp. Above all the sounds I hear it, like a heart beating. At that moment, and at such a distance, the melody is less, the pulse more. I move along the cliffs, nearer. It is a Mexican harp, less confident, less insistent, than the larger Italian instrument. The throbbing and humming of the strings, and their sweet, high, plucking sound comes, faintly muffled, across the space between me and the pavilion on the other side. From below in the garden here and there rise the voices of people.

It is such a garden as a child might happily have laid out. The whole of it is gay and arbitrary, without design, but pleasant and innocent, the shifting pools with their great lotos flowers, blue, rose and lemon yellow, above the wide leaves; the cranes, in their green bronze, halting on one foot among them; the paths climbing and rambling; the rock islets and bridges; the screens of bamboo and banana; the scented petunias and bright lilies; and at the top of the highest cliff and zigzag path the round pavilion thatched with palm leaves, a pale fawn color under the

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hot sun, the place beneath its shade set out with benches and tables. Here drinks and ices may be had all day, and all day from ten until six in the evening, with short rests between, the harp plays.

I cross over along the path, and find me a seat in the pavilion, feeling the summer breeze, shaded from the strong light but seeing the white rocks and dark greens, the glint of the water in the pools, the sharp shadows, and the sun on the shining air. The harp player is a little away from the tables, nearer the pavilion entrance.

He has a head, with its dark skin and gray hair, such as you see in El Greco, though less fantastic, simpler and more solid. But, though the face is thus not so erratic or intense as those faces of El Greco's or so personal to any artist's dream, there is the same round skull, and smooth bones in the brow, the same deep, grave eyes, acute and sad, and the same nose, slightly aquiline, with clear, fine nostrils, the same line of contemplation in the poise of the head. His shirt is like the shirts I have seen in the country districts or on market days in Spain and Italy, home-made, of some plain white cotton stuff, home-washed and ironed without starch. His whole air is clean and decent and grave, and when I have put money in the saucer on the table near him, and thank him for his music and offer him a cigarette, he rises, speaks half a dozen Spanish words of thanks and bows, all courteous and remote. I seem to be in the presence of some quality, curiously abstract, some state, as if it were human life rather than a man; the vivid and intense vitality is like an animal's; the leanness is ascetic like a visionary's, the quietness is alive like nature.

Only lately a very intelligent man, who has been lately in Mexico for a long time and knows something of the country, has been telling me that the problem in Mexico is one of finding a central government for a people who have no gift for government and no inclination toward such an end. Indeed, they could not be called a nation but consist of diverse tribes in as many provinces. Their movement is constantly toward a complete return, away from the Spanish overlay, to the Indian. Left to themselves they would soon divide into the various sections or tribe districts, all of them, doubtless, flying at one another's throats.

This may be true of Mexicans, and for all I know, be a just prophecy, or it may not. If true, it amounts to saying, then, that though they may have other capacities and talents, they have no gift for government. One man has one gift, one another; there is one glory of the moon and another glory of the stars, and a difference in glory is no lack of it. What ties this man to any society are certain characteristics that he has, certain strong type things, which he inherited, which he was taught once by his elders, and in which through the years he has, more or less consciously, disciplined himself.

Always when I see him these things come into my mind. They seem to arise from him as distinct as the abstractions of Greek myths or of the theater of Sophocles, clear things written on him as once on the masks, where the permanent elements of our natures, as set forth in some god or hero or state of mind, were so distinctly stated. In this man they are all curiously Latin in their quality.

He has the *decenza,* as the Italians, for example, mean it—a sense of what is decent, not with the implications of obscenity, exposition, morality that belong to our word, but of what is becoming, what is clean and proper in its aspect, respectful toward life, fitting. Outwardly, from his clothes, his manner, his expression, and inwardly, you can see that *decenza* exists for him. One is ruled by this decency, because taste is the last, fine morality of the mind and is the soul of the conscience. One may lack a sense of humor and may put small value on the excitements of individuality, but life is to be presented by what is fitting and by what is proper to the last grace of it. The man, leaning over his harp quietly, rising to thank me, understands this instinctively.

I remember once in a play by the Quinteros brothers a line where the mother said, "My son, you are not good." I thought at the time how that speech would never have been in an English play. We might have said you are not a good man or are not being good, but not merely the word *good* thus, standing alone like some vivid attribute or fixed, pure quality. In this Latin play, however, it followed in a combination; after a series of other details and in combination with them, to say he was not good was to say a great deal, a wide but also an exact statement. In this sense I can see, from those eyes, that face, that courteous outward order and decorum, that the harp player is good. It is a goodness that consists essentially of a harmony of parts, a health of the spirit, a simple, sweet wholeness of being and heart that in its region is like health in the body, a soundness and rightness of physical functions. For this reason this sort of goodness is simple or mystical, but not subjective, not turned in, stewed up, conscious of itself. It has something of a universality, something that falls into a type, a subtlety, if you like, within outlines; and it seems to present a sort of kindly essence that is permanent in us. It proceeds from the whole man; it has no puritanical or pietistic unpleasantness about it or inverted egotism, but only the harmony of nature; and it is not in danger of losing its sweetness because it is profoundly natural in its character.

I am forced to wonder what is the exact notion, in his head, of life, if the day is long to him, if life is long, and the extent to which he is conscious of his own reflections or quiescent and charged with feeling and mood like an animal. What does he think of that friendly or prosperous or harsh or vulgar or pressing or busy life in the streets of San Antonio off there to the south, in this bright light and dreamlike air, rising, as Byron wrote of another city, like water columns from the sea? What does he think of this innocent scurrying of the American world around him? I do not know what he thinks out in this direction for himself, but I know that the character of his mind is a curious mixture of metaphysical and realistic, of a patient, sharp acumen and prose, of passion and simple, literal sentiment, and pride, and a fatalistic quietude that, but for these hard, wire muscles and burning eyes, might be taken for mere lazy inertia.

And then I think nothing at all about him, for his harp begins again and persuades me only to the simple moment, the day, the sun, the pathos and gentleness of time, as the notes of the melody stream out against the lower strings and the leaves in the garden around.

STARK YOUNG.

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CORRESPONDENCE

What's Wrong with the Movies

SIR: I wish to protest against the censoring of the last paragraph of my letter of July 9, which you printed in part in your issue of August 7. Answering several points of Gilbert Seldes' article on the Russian films, I endeavored to show in my letter that the *montage* technique of Eisenstein, Pudowkin and the other Russian film creators came into existence primarily as a result of the Revolutionary symbolism and ideas by which it was determined, and that there is no chance for a purely intellectual revolution in Hollywood without a corresponding revolution in Middletown. A mere revolution in film technique and a mere replacement of bad films by good ones, I said, could go so far but no further, so long as the present temper and social ideology of the American people prevails. "In every case, it is the spirit, that is, the social and moral idea, that determines what the technique shall be. The technique does not create the spirit." It was the consummation of my main argument, the final paragraph, that you deleted. In refutation of what I believed to be Mr. Seldes' unrealistic point of view, I wrote as follows:

> I would, therefore, like to warn Mr. Seldes, that while "something of the technique" (but not very much of it) could perhaps in a limited way be incorporated in American pictures, the incorporation of even "something" of the spirit constitutes a different problem which he and his followers dare not hope for without, frankly, a revolution in America. Even if it were not for the appallingly swinish conditions of the American motion picture industry today, there would still be a vast legion of women's clubs, patriotic societies, censor boards, Boy Scout organizations, afternoon tea clubs, "uplift" associations, etc., *ad infinitum,* not to mention the complete industrial structure, with Wall Street dictating both technique and spirit, to stand in the way of realizing his hope for the creation of films of passion and "moral fervor" in present-day America. In fact, I do not understand how Mr. Seldes can thoughtfully dissociate the "spirit" from the "technique," or how he can expect that even if a revolution at last came to Hollywood, the citizens of Middletown would be ready to receive the revolutionized product unless they had a little explosion of their own, to change their souls. This age has taught that art is what the social order makes it, and Mr. Seldes must ultimately become realistic enough to see that neither Britain nor America will have a Pudowkin or an Eisenstein until their own idols tremble and fall in the marketplace. At present, Mr. Seldes wants the cake, but disdains the dough for baking it.

This was the crux and essence of my letter—the full expression of a viewpoint that is growing among those who sadly contemplate the gulf which exists between Russia's world-beating film art and Hollywood's dismal moronic "entertainment." I am at a loss to understand why you cut this paragraph, but my suspicion is that you do not like to admit the reality of the sentiment. Yet The New Republic is a *liberal* magazine?

Universal City, Calif. SEYMOUR STERN.

[Mr. Stern's letter was shortened, not because the editors disagreed with it, but because of its great length and because the final passage seemed to us repetitive.—THE EDITORS.]

The Law Is the Law

SIR: It is the law that our lives must be lived by rule. Whatever the difference in personality, whatever the circumstances, human or divine, the law-breaker is punished according to the measure of the book.

On August 8, Mr. Fred Erb, seventy-five years old, of Lawrence, Kansas, shot and killed his bed-ridden wife, also seventy-five. Then he held the revolver against his own head and pulled the trigger four times, but it failed to fire. His wife had suffered hopelessly from hardening of the arteries, which was slowly paralyzing her body. He killed her in mercy and because he could no longer bear the sight of her pain. Calling the police, he said: "I have killed my wife. Come and get me." He was arrested and placed in jail.

The couple had been married fifty-eight years. Excerpts from his story, in the press: "We were so attached to each other. I loved Susan so. She loved me. All these years there has been no one else for either of us. . . . I am not sorry. She is better off. My God, you know she is better off. But I wanted to be with her. I must die now. . . . Oh, to have lived all these years, so happy. Now everything is gone and I am in jail for the first time in my life."

The following day Mr. Erb pleaded guilty to first degree murder in the Lawrence district court and was sentenced to life imprisonment. August 10, he was taken to the Lansing state prison, dressed in regulation prison garb, and led to a cell.

The Kansas City press reported opinions on the case by prominent local lawyers, preachers, social workers. Eleven persons thought the punishment justified, five said Mr. Erb should not have been punished. The majority opinion was expressed by former Senator James A. Reed, when he said: "However pitiable this instance, however much this man suffered and himself desires to die, as I do not doubt, we are obliged in the interest of public policy, to punish him. If his mind is unsettled he should be put in an asylum; if not, in prison."

Kansas City, Mo. BERT S. CHEWNING.

The Non-Conformist Leghorn Hat

SIR: After what Mr. Borsodi has said about the tyranny of fashion, let me add my mite. I like to indulge myself in a nice straw hat. Being nice, it should be made to last in proportion, which means several seasons. So with this in mind, I bought me a really nice Leghorn hat with a pleated band.

The first year I wore it half a season. The next I wore it all season. Then it rested in the closet while I summered in the far North. And this spring I got it out for the final lap.

The straw was still perfect but dirty. I discarded the band, soaked the hat in a pail of soap and water, sunk it in my brook with a couple of rocks to get the soap out, and when dry it had a fresh look and a delightfully soft texture. Then I bought a piece of really beautiful Liberty silk for a band, and full of satisfaction I tried to wear it in New York.

But there I got into trouble. A lady friend sulked all through one evening. Another was kind enough to call it distinctly individual. And one hot day the "Boss" vented his feelings about it to the "stenog." So I bought a cheap Panama, and now all is serene.

No one maintained that the color of the band din't just match the straw. It did. It also matched my suit, though I had to pick my ties carefully. The straw was always brown, and when my critics learned that it was not due to sun-burn, that fact was allowed. But no one claimed that the color was ugly—it could be anything as long as it did not represent seasoning and honorable service.

The curse lay in two things. In the first place, the hat was out of style this year. That was a cardinal sin. In the second, no one else had a hat band like it. That was damning. It could be as effective as possible, but while I differed from the herd I was a marked man. And so I now wear my stupid Panama and grind my teeth in rage. But in the country, where my little brook babbles softly by, I still wear my comfortable Leghorn and indulge my taste for soft straw and lovely silk in solitude. In the meantime, women are going bare-legged, but that is all right because everyone is doing it.

New York City. EDWIN S. PARKER.

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Mr. Borsodi's Way Out

SIR: For the past two hours I have been in the garden picking beans and brooding darkly on the exquisite Arcadian existence described so alluringly in a recent series of articles by Mr. Borsodi.

For five years I have been practising this preaching and it is only fair to mention some of the thorns on the rosebush. To begin with, I elected this method of living because of two young children to whom country life seemed important. I still think the choice a wise one. The children are strong and hardy. They can cope intelligently with the problems of their small world. They are familiar with the processes of nature in an impersonal, unemotional way. I like country life. I like the garden, the dogs, the bees, the cow and the pony. But it is not a life of ease and freedom.

I came to the country with a background of lifelong familiarity with just the sort of living which Mr. Borsodi describes to my amazement as something new and different. My grandmother started the winter with the cellar full of bins of vegetables and apples, the woodshed stacked with fragrant hardwood for the stoves, the "woodshed chamber" rafters hung with pungent bunches of thyme, summer savory, sage and peppers—maple syrup, honey, soft soap—everything her large household would need for the long months of cold.

Every summer of my childhood was spent on a farm where making soft soap was an event—the big rack of wood ashes, the lye, the huge boiling kettle. To this day I can feel the cool, semi-gelatinuos slipperiness as we dipped the soap in pitchers from big tubs in the cellar. The most delightful spot on summer days was the "well house" where pans of milk were set on moist slabs of stone over the brim of the deep well. There my grandmother skimmed such cream as city dwellers never dreamed of, and made butter that I recall as ambrosial. One of our favorite spots was the stone top of the "smoke house" where hams and bacon were cured in hickory smoke every fall.

All this is by way of showing that I did not tackle an unfamiliar job.

True it is that we who live in the country do not have to punch a time clock. But we live by the far more inexorable routine imposed by nature. We live like train dispatchers. We cannot address the cherry trees in mournful tones to the effect that we must have a day off for the funeral of a departed grandparent. When the cherries are ready, we hop to it and can them—or lose the chance for a whole year. In "good growing weather" the beans must be picked the day they are ready. Raspberries must be picked daily—or they fall off and birds and squirrels get the lot. Just picking the fruit and vegetables—to say nothing of killing weeds—takes more than the "half hour a day" allotted to the garden by Mr. Borsodi.

To live in the country means that the children must be taken to and from school, husbands delivered to and collected from commuting trains. The woman in the case must be able and willing to be on the job about eighteen hours a day, seven days a week, fifty-two weeks a year, from breakfast on the table on the dot of seven to clearing up after a seven o'clock dinner. She must be a taxi driver, a fair mechanic, a competent nurse with ability and equipment for prompt first aid in all manner of cuts, bumps, sprains, and such attacks as overdoses of green apples in infant and animal. After the first year I assured my husband that I had scabbed on every union except the Seamen and Structural Iron Workers. Now Mr. Borsodi wants me to include the latter!

The lady of the house—God save the mark—must be able to recognize the indications of swarming in the bees and of matrimonial aspirations on the part of the cow. She must have some idea of the unbelievable number of things that can happen to chickens. Coops must be sprayed and cleaned, eggs gathered daily. To be sure, children can gather eggs. Mine did, till the seven-year-old tripped and sat down in the bucket of ninety eggs. For my own part, nothing on earth could induce me to decapitate and eviscerate a chicken. It is a filthy job. And I can do very nicely without "fat roast capon" if the alternative is caponizing the cockerels myself.

On the other hand, I do not hesitate to put on rubber boots, tackle a choked drain, haul stone, cut brush, tap maple trees—by the way, it takes fifty gallons of sap to make one gallon of syrup. In other words, I am "no lady." But all this means that there is an amazingly wide field of expert knowledge that no machine can supply, or supplant, and an unconscionable amount of hard and disagreeable work that most women cannot and will not do. And it means, also, that it takes a high order of executive ability to run the job.

For every machine that is domesticated, there is further demand for expert knowledge. And further necessity for washing the pesky thing. I can beat, for example, the far-famed mayonnaise mixer—a complicated mass of wires and heavy aluminum with three speeds forward—with a soup plate and a fork. I can produce exactly as good mayonnaise in the same time with less dish-washing. Some machines are unquestionably labor savers. But someone has to be behind the machines. The most talented electric cooker that can turn itself off when the roast is done and keep the dinner hot for untold hours cannot plan a balanced diet for two hungry youngsters. I am advised that there is a pea-shelling machine. But the peas must be picked, pods removed and fed to the proper creature just the same. Dogs are a great pleasure, but feeding three big ones is a real job and an appreciable item of expense.

Now I dare swear from reading those articles and knowing from experience the amount and variety of labor entailed, that there is a "hired man" on that place every day. Why otherwise a concrete mixer and assorted tractors? I dare swear, also, that some stalwart peasant back is bent over the waxing machine and mangle about once a week. All the cooking, all the cleaning, all the canning, all the taxi driving, all the care of children (as far as I know there is no machine for making beds and washing the children's faces)—well, it just can't be done single-handed. And if we should add weaving and spinning——! It was such unremitting toil that killed our great-grandmothers at about forty-five or younger. I recall, for example, statistics to show, that an early Harvard class wore out three and three-quarters wives per capita. If you think all that work can be done, come out to my place and try it. Not with all the machines in kingdom come. No, the "way out" looks to me very much like the way further in. It reads suspiciously like the time-honored utterance of the outraged male—"What better would any woman want than to make a home for some good man!"

While children are small enough to need a home-nest, many of us are willing and glad to do a stretch of solitary confinement at hard labor—for day after day goes by with no one to swap a word with except infants and laborers—but when the nestlings have flown, what is there in it for the woman? Not all of us like machines. Not all of us find an outlet in domestic labor except for the immediate purpose of home-making. And to me, home-making implies children, not just an able-bodied male who happens to enjoy country life.

It is all very well for those who can invest in some twenty to fifty acres of land—a house, barns, chicken coops, a well, tractors, one or more automobiles and domestic machines by the score—for those who can carry an overhead of $125 to $150 a month for labor, or for those who, like my rural neighbors, never bother their heads about a factory system, but among whom every member of the family works from dawn to dusk and then some. They, too, have tractors and washing machines. But it is no serene harbor for those who want peace and leisure.

And if this method is so good, why not go the whole hog and give up earning money at all? If money can be saved in every item used, why seek further? Back to the land!

No, to my mind this isn't the way out. Far more to the point would it be to domesticate the entire factory system—to make it really serve us as we want. I am not hinting at any utopian ideal. The machine age has run away from us, but it is by no means a wild dream to catch up with it and make use of it. And it is far more in line with the trend of human thought and the growing desire for leisure and freedom from drudgery. After all, we make small contribution if we retreat to our own few acres and there spin our own little web. That was the almost universal habit and necessity of living till about two hundred

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years ago. Is it desirable to go back to the patriarchal ways, accompanied by a dish washer and a vacuum cleaner?

Suffern, N. Y. F. E. B.

[The New Republic is planning to print in the near future an article by Mr. Borsodi in which these and other criticisms and comments on his proposal will be dealt with.—THE EDITORS.]

A City Dweller, and Likes It

SIR: I have been greatly interested in the articles by Mr. Ralph Borsodi appearing in The New Republic, and like Mr. Borsodi, I feel that the quest of comfort and the elimination of some of the ugly features of this civilization is vastly more important than piling up profits, increasing factory output or maintaining a favorable balance of trade.

But I do not think that much can be gained by making the home "both a residence and a production center." I have found that the homes of factory workers, even at their worst, are not as bad as sweat-shop homes, nor some of the basement and backroom living quarters in connection with small shops and one-horse industries. According to the information handed down to us the home of weavers and tanners, of bakers and candlestick makers of a century or two ago had little of beauty, comfort or convenience. No, thank you, I prefer a hotel apartment with oriental rugs, Japanese prints and electric refrigeration.

I agree with Mr. Borsodi that close contact with trees and plants and animals, with forms of life other than genius *homo sapiens* has its value, and yet I get infinitely more stimulation and at times even sheer exultation from the tremendous rush and flow of life in a city like Chicago or New York. Though I detest dirty streets and ill-smelling, crowded subways and prefer the role of contemplative onlooker from above, still I find a certain zest in being a unit of a crowd.

What with electricity, radio, rural free delivery bringing the book of the month and a university correspondence course right to the gate, the farmer can have nearly all the advantages of the city and escape many of its disadvantages—especially if there is some other source of income. But it is not to my taste. Perhaps I had too much of farm life in childhood and youth. Up at four o'clock in the morning to get berries picked and hoeing done before the heat of the day—but it was never done—washing milk bottles and heavy cans, milking, into the house at night—the dirty dishes of the hasty breakfast still on the table, often too tired to eat or do anything but drop into the unmade beds—thankful if enough money came in to pay the interest on the mortgage, the taxes, to keep supplied with flour, sugar, coffee, shoes in winter and a coat once in three years.

Recent contact with berry pickers and beet field workers leads me to believe that for many farmers conditions are much the same. I know a good many farms where they do not have either the variety or quality of fruit and vegetables that can be purchased at any good city market.

I think too, that real and lasting satisfaction is found only in work and never in mere amusement. I am sure Luther Burbank found more pleasure in walking down his bean row than any golfer ever found in tramping over the links. There is no ultimate reason why it should not be just as fascinating to manipulate a hoe as a niblick. It is all a matter of environment and psychological attitude. But whenever I am speeding along the highway at forty miles an hour and see these tillers of the soil, women and children on their knees with the sun beating down on their backs, instinctively a prayer wells up from every cell of my being: "Thank God I'm not there." It is the most profound prayer I ever make.

The craftsman's interest in his work, the joy of creation has been destroyed by factory methods and it is, I think, essential—something we must try to regain. But we cannot go back to individual production except in sporadic cases. The advantages of mass production are too great. The best solution that I see is for the workers in a certain industry to own and control that industry. Even with division of labor and specialization the worker could again feel the pride of ownership, the joy of creation, again he would be working for himself and not for some master. I think we must look toward working out some such scheme instead of going back to individualistic production.

And as to a domiciliary edifice—I'll take a little niche in a skyscraper apartment and well toward the top. In my opinion, America's finest creation so far, is the modern skyscraper. "There is a note of vitality, of aspiration, of upward-rushing emotion" in their clean, massive shafts. We have not learned to give them proper setting yet, wide avenues and adequate parks, but perhaps we will.

Chicago's newest building, occupying a block, has more than ninety-two acres of floor space. The economy of ground the skyscraper apartment achieves by shooting up into the air ought to be devoted, in part at least, to park and playground. For my part, I prefer a magnificent skyscraper dwelling surrounded by several acres of park to row on row of monotonous suburban homes, each with a two-by-four yard. I am so optimistic as to believe that some day the American public will appreciate and respect our parks so much that they will not leave them strewn with newspapers, gum wrappers and crackerjack boxes.

Surely our architects can design apartments with numerous slim shafts that are beautiful and that give sun, air and a good view on three sides of each suite. Can we not have the economy in heating, in refrigerating and vacuum cleaning systems, in janitor and landscape gardening service that comes with large unit housing and still have sunshine, air, beauty, contact with trees and growing things, silence and privacy?

ZELLA WRIGHT NEWCOMB.

Washington, D. C.

Church and State in Mexico

SIR: I have read with great interest your review and the comments of the American press generally, on the "accord" that has been reached between the Mexican government and the Roman Catholic Church, and being here on the ground, in touch with every phase of the subject, I think a word should be said through your columns, not only in the interest of simplifying the entire proposition, but in removing many of the cobwebs which American editorial commentators have interpolated, unnecessarily.

Stated in terms that preclude all misunderstanding, the Mexican government, after enduring centuries of priest control of political, and economic as well as religious affairs, passed certain laws by which to curb the advancing power of the priests. The Mexican Episcopacy appealed to the Vatican and, to use an expression that all can understand, the clergy of Mexico were instructed to go on a strike, which they did. Their work stopped and the churches closed automatically as a result.

The strike lasted for about three years; in the meantime, the government was subjected to every form of annoyance and torment that the ingenious minds of the clergy were able to invent, including downright revolution by force of arms and the activities of Catholic organizations all over the world; the Knights of Columbus in the United States circulating millions of copies of a special pastoral letter on the subject besides millions of pamphlets and booklets broadcast throughout the world.

The day following the "accord," President Portes Gil of Mexico caused to be published in the principal Mexican papers a clear statement of the fact that the basis of the settlement between the government and the Catholic Church was exactly the same as that offered by President Calles two years ago and that the Vatican and the Hierarchy in Mexico had accepted the government's proposition to obey the laws and come under the regulations of the government the same as all other institutions operating under its sovereignty.

In other words, the Vatican and the Mexican Hierarchy at the urgent request of the priests, who were anxious to get back to business again, reversed the former *infallible dictum of the Pope*, and got back on the job on the only terms that were open to them, all of which is quite satisfactory to every one here in Mexico, including this writer. . . .

PARKER H. SERCOMBE.

Mixcoac, Mexico.

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A French View of England

A History of the English People. Epilogue Volume I. 1895-1905, by Elie Halévy. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 440 pages. $6.

M. HALEVY has decided to close his history of the English people during the nineteenth century with the year of Gladstone's retirement, 1895, as the true end of the Victorian age. He has interrupted his labors on the main work, however, to give us one of two Epilogue Volumes, dealing with the decade 1895-1905. Difficult as it may be to follow M. Halévy's reasons for this procedure, we are grateful to him for the timely appearance of the present volume. With his over-channel perspective M. Halévy has been able to give an account both compact and comprehensive of the development of English national character during the period anterior to our own. M. Halévy is a genuine historian of a people. He differs from the heroic school of historians, who see history as a record of what great men have accomplished in the world, and also from the school of economic determinists. In discussing the trade union movement he asks: "But must we insist at all costs on a purely economic philosophy of history? Why should we refuse to look elsewhere for the explanation of the peaceful attitude displayed by the working class during the five or six years which followed the election of 1895?" This explanation he finds in the wave of imperialism which swept the country and provided the English people with a host of potential enemies, France, Russia, Germany, as well as the Boers. He sees not only in political affairs but in the change in the religious orientation of the people, in the reorganization of education, and in the industrial movement, evidence of "the permanent foundation" of English national character "which underlies these superficial changes." "Today," he continues, "as in the past, everything in England is instinctive groping, mutual tolerance and compromise." The ten years which he has chosen afford, it would seem, the best possible field for illustrating that aspect of English history which has been called "muddling through." The lag and lapse between intention and result, the association of disparate elements in one combination, the union of parties of divergent aims to achieve an end unexpected by all, the confusion of thought and misdirection of action is seen more clearly in these years of comparative peace than in the turmoil of the Great War and the muddy unsettlement which followed.

If M. Halévy has a hero it is Joseph Chamberlain, the most powerful political leader of the time and the most perfect representative of the prevailing confusion of the age. Chamberlain had taken the opportunity of the Home Rule bill in 1886 to separate himself from the Liberal party, of which Gladstone's domination threatened to be eternal. For ten years he was the leader of the Liberal Unionists in alliance with the Conservatives, but at the election of 1895 the two parties were amalgamated. Lord Salisbury's leadership was as obnoxious to Chamberlain as Gladstone's, and to give himself as large scope as possible he chose to become Secretary of State for the Colonies. Chamberlain's great hold on the country was due to his advocacy, in his radical days, of remedial measures in industry, such as workmen's compensation, unemployment benefits and old age pensions. These he made part of the program of the Conservative party, in imitation of Bismarck, and enlisted the support of the Fabians. But at the same time he adopted the policy of colonial expansion as an aid to business, and plunged the country into the Boer War, from which it emerged without financial means for social experiments. To raise a larger revenue, it was necessary to "broaden the basis of taxation," which meant import duties; and Chamberlain hoped by them to revive British manufacture and to promote closer relations with the self-governing dominions by reciprocity. He resigned from the Cabinet in 1904 to throw himself into a country-wide campaign for "Fair Trade." Never was a statesman more mistaken in his calculations. The Boer War had split the Liberal party into two apparently irreconcilable factions, the Pro-Boers and the Liberal Imperialists. Chamberlain's tariff policy threw them into one another's arms in defense of free trade, and brought them back into power in 1905. Chamberlain had led the working class into enthusiastic support of the war, but they could not forgive his retraction in the matter of social legislation, and they were further alienated by his adoption of protection, a policy associated with aristocratic and plutocratic rule. Finally, the dominions had already embarked on protectionist devices of their own and showed no disposition to sacrifice promising infant industries to their grandmother. Altogether Chamberlain brought down his party and prepared the nemesis of his country. The astonishing thing is that he maintained his triumphant aplomb to the last—the strong man in politics.

M. Halévy's account of foreign policy in this period is interesting as an illustration of the rule of instinct rather than reason even in the field of diplomacy, which is supposed to be that of the best minds. The secular enemies of Great Britain were France and Russia. British interests were threatened by the former in Africa, where in 1898 the penetration of Marchand's expedition to Fashoda on the Nile brought both countries to the verge of war, and by the latter in China and on the Indian frontier. At the same time relations with Germany were improving. The Kaiser's visit during the Boer War was a gesture of friendship when Great Britain had begun to fear that her isolation was less splendid than dangerous. His return to London to walk in the funeral procession of Queen Victoria in 1901 strengthened the bond. The Hegelian conception of the state was the basis of the political philosophy of the Imperialists, and Bismarck's social legislation was the ideal of reformers. Chamberlain was entirely pro-German, and tried to force Lord Salisbury in this direction. An actual alliance between the two nations was under discussion in 1901. But Germany was a rival of British manufacture even in the home market; the naval law of 1901 looked to the creation of a German fleet which would threaten Britain's two-power standard; the German official class and the press were persistently hostile. Chamberlain's speech at Edinburgh, October 23, 1901, defending repressive measures against the non-combatant Boers by the example offered by Germany in the Franco-German War, aroused a storm which blew Chamberlain out of the pro-German camp; the Kaiser on his visit in 1902, met with a hostile reception from people and press; and when in December of that year German and British warships were sent to Venezuela, the popular outburst of indigation forced the ministry to give assurances that no understanding with Germany was contemplated. M. Halévy does not explicitly indicate how far he considers Edward VII responsible for the Entente with France. In 1902 the British rejected Delcassé's proposals for an understanding in regard to Morocco and Egypt, but in 1903 King Edward visited Paris, and the reign of cordiality had begun. On April 8, 1904, a comprehensive agreement between

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France and England was drawn up, which gave the former a free hand in Morocco, and the latter in Egypt, and settled their respective claims in Newfoundland, Africa, Spain and the New Hebrides. It was at first opposed by such imperialists as Lord Rosebery, and applauded by pacifists long tormented by the spectre of the traditional enemy. Neither party realized that the exclusion of Germany would be followed by her insistence on the dismissal of Delcassé and her interference in Morocco, which gradually brought Great Britain and France into military consultation, and from consultation into joint action in 1914.

The same theme of discrepancy between what is desired and what is got, between plans and results, is enforced in other fields, particularly education and religion. The education bill of 1902 was passed by the Tories, partly in the interests of efficiency, to consolidate the control of the schools in the county councils, partly to grant to church schools a share in the rates and to make religious instruction general. The dissenters opposed the bill so bitterly that they organized in some cases for passive resistance and the refusal to pay taxes. In the end, however, the educational results submerged the threat of ecclesiastical domination. M. Halévy notes as one phase of the eclipse of Victorian liberalism the decline in the activity of the Protestant sects. The challenge of intellectual enlightenment to religion resulted in a tendency to fall back on the dogmatic types of faith as better fitted than Protestantism to meet the challenge. The Roman Catholic church gained from the Anglican; the High Church and Anglo-Catholic movement gained at the expense of the Low and Broad Church parties. There was a strong movement toward uniting religious bodies against a common enemy. This Mr. Halévy interprets as a sign of weakness in traditional British Protestantism of which the basis is individualism, and which shows its vitality by the multiplication of sects. At all events the outstanding fact is that political power by the democratic reform bills of 1832, 1867 and 1889 had passed to a class which was equally low in property and in religion. Whereas the number of Englishmen who practised some form of Christianity in 1867 was estimated at twice or three times that of the electorate, after 1884 the proportion has been reversed ,and the number of voters far exceeded the active members of the Christian denominations. In the light of this situation political struggles over religious instruction, ritualism and a new prayer book seem to partake of a certain unreality.

But the most interesting illustration of M. Halévy's thesis that historical results depend on national character is afforded by his account of the rise of the British Labor party. In 1884 two societies appeared which represented two different methods of reorganizing society: one was the Social Democratic Federation, founded by H. M. Hyndman, with the object of promoting the social views of Karl Marx; the other was the Fabian Society under the influence of Sidney and Beatrice Webb, with the aim of bringing about the socialization of enterprises in which the public interest was predominant, by a program of state and municipal socialism. Impressive as was the initiation of these two movements, neither was the real pioneer in the actual work of building the party which now rules the empire. That was the function of the Independent Labor party, founded in 1892 through the efforts of Keir Hardie. The new party was not able to commit the trade unions to the policy of taxing themselves for a fund to pay election expenses and the salaries of elected members, but in 1895 it put twenty-eight candidates into the field and polled 45,000 votes.

The next five years were black ones for British Labor. Two great strikes, fought and lost, that of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers in 1897 and that of the Welsh Coal Miners in 1898, enforced the necessity of a Labor offensive and accordingly in 1899 the Congress voted (546,000 to 434,000) to summon a conference on the best means of increasing the representation of Labor in the House of Commons. This Conference met in London, in February, 1900, and set up a Labor Representation Committee, of which James Ramsay MacDonald became Secretary, and to which unions numbering 353,000 members gave allegiance; agreeing to pay 10/ for each 1,000 members. Although both the Social Democratic Federation and the Fabians accepted the committee, the former soon withdrew, and the latter did everything in their power to discredit it. They were still under the influence of Chamberlain's promises and of the Liberal Imperialists. When the Taff Vale decision of the House of Lords in 1901 threatened the very existence of the Trades Unions by holding them liable to employers for strike damages, the necessity of the Labor party was clear. Though its progenitors were Socialists, they declared that the new party was not an instrument for the realization of an economic theory, but a weapon to defend the corporate interests of labor. Although in the Khaki Election of 1900 only two Labor candidates had obtained seats, in the by-elections which followed they won striking victories, particularly that of Will Crooks at Woolwich in 1903. Then set in that steady tide toward the Labor party which carried along the reluctant trade unionists on the one hand, and the intellectuals on the other, swamping the opposition of the official Fabians. "An alliance had been concluded between the intelligentsia and the proletariat. In every country that alliance is dangerous to a social order based on property."

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

A Regional Poet

Blue Juniata: Poems, by Malcolm Cowley. New York: Harrison Smith and Jonathan Cape. 115 pages. $2.

THIS collection of fifty-five poems covers the history of Mr. Cowley's mind in the last ten years. Like all of his writing, it is beautifully finished, and as poetry it is of an order very rare in the American scene: Mr. Cowley not only has a specific talent for poetry, he is a highly trained man of letters, and his verse is a fine example of the discipline of craftsmanship that few Americans achieve. Between the generation of Chapman and Brownell and the generation of Cowley there were few Americans who successfully cultivated more than one type of literature. Cowley has done almost every kind of writing, and done it well. This is his first book, and it corrects one's previous belief that the finely ordered surface of his style was somewhat deficient in coherence and depth. No American at present writes a more lucid prose than Cowley, and yet it is now clear that prose, certainly critical prose, is not his true medium. His mind is basically concrete and unspeculative; he brings to facts and observations an even, emotional tone that is the mark of a genuine style; but in criticism Cowley's instinct for exact definition is not strong; and the necessity for a certain amount of abstraction only violates the even tone of his style. It is in poetry, at least for the present, that Mr. Cowley may be seen at his best.

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And yet the long discipline of prose has given to his poetry much of its distinction of form. If Cowley might have written better, or at least as well, in another age, that age is the early eighteenth century. His poetry has gone diligently to the school of prose: there is hardly a passage in this book that is not good prose before it is good poetry—a merit that not much contemporary poetry may claim:

> Between the waves, out of the sight of land
> at night toward an unseen beacon swimming
> the sea flung her arms about his arms
> in foam, mingled her hair with his
> and clung against his breast
> against his lips the salt pulse of the sea.

These lines from "Leander," one of his finest poems, move with the loose orderliness of highly conscious prose—without any falling off in the poetry.

Mr. Cowley has arranged his poems in two ways, and the grouping is of two kinds. There are poems belonging to a certain year, or to a period of two or three years; there are poems belonging to a sentiment or an idea which come under distinct headings. The latter are his best work; but the former extend and enrich the book as a whole, and give it important documentary interest. The value of "Blue Juniata" as poetry is high; as a document of the first post-war generation it is unique. (The sections of the book are welded together and placed in the time when the poet wrote them, by short prose paragraphs written with great point and skill.) Cowley's generation appeared after the war had given the "genteel tradition" and the provincial ways of life in America a staggering blow. This volume is the record kept by a member of this generation who broke with his past, witnessed the moral collapse of Europe, and returned to make the best of the confused intellectual life of post-war New York.

There are particular scenes and emotions that linger in Cowley's imagination: his book is well named for a river in Pennsylvania by which, I believe, he spent his childhood. Out of this material he has written his best poems. His regional verse is superficially less brilliant than the poems he wrote in direct contact with Europe, and less striking technically than certain abstract poems ("Death," "Time," "William Wilson"); but it is far more moving, less self-conscious; his technical resources are used to better effect, if less spectacularly. An inferior artist like Mr. Vachel Lindsay, or even a superior one like Mr. Frost outside his best moments, would have boomed the local features of the Juniata country, and given us more Juniata than poetry. Mr. Cowley, however, refuses to publish pretty landscapes and characters without first reducing them to order and form. It is this almost unerring sense of form that gives value to the slightest pieces in this volume.

There are no bad poems in the book: the difference between his best and his worst does not lie in the difference between good and bad writing. This fact defines, for the moment, Mr. Cowley's talent. In him we see neither the failure of careless writing nor the grand failures of Blake or Hardy; for although he is a romantic poet—that is, a poet dealing with sentiments and passive emotions rather than with obsessive ideas that are driven to the point of disintegration (Shakespeare, Racine)—he stops his impulse on the hither side of order; he does not push it over the line dividing incoherence from intelligible form. There are no great moments in Cowley, and there are no disconcerting lapses. There is subdued emotion; there are exact feelings and images; and over all, a subtle vision of the startling qualities of common things. Malcolm Cowley is one of our most distinguished talents, and he has given us, in an unrhymed lyric "The Urn," a poem the quality of which is, within its range, unsurpassed in our time:

> Wanderers outside the gates, in hollow
> landscapes without memory, we carry
> each of us an urn of native soil
> of not impalpable dust a double handful
>
> carelessly gathered (was it garden mould
> or wood-soil fresh with hemlock needles, pine
> and princess pine, this little earth we bore
> in secret, vainly, over the frontier?)
>
> A parcel of the soil not wide enough
> or firm enough to build a dwelling on
> or deep enough to dig a grave, but cool
> and sweet enough to sink the nostrils in
> and find the smell of home, or in the ears
> rumors of home like oceans in a shell.

ALLEN TATE.

"Always Belittlin'"

God's Country, by Ralph Barton. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 338 pages. $4.

THIS readiness to die for a design printed on bunting is common to men of all races. . . . It is used to help politicians to rise to greatness, it aids a little in keeping down the population, and distinguishes, in a broad sense, mankind from the lower animals. It is immoderately romantic and allows men to transcend the realities of everyday life in an adventure with death. It is, moreover, deliciously, bewitchingly idiotic, mischievous and wasteful, and for these qualities very dear to the human heart."

I should say that the author of the above paragraph had read "Candide" and "Gulliver's Travels." The inspiration of the following supposed thoughts of Abraham Lincoln is not so lofty:

"What we ought to do is retain the present state of war and get up some sort of Sacred Cause for it. It's a burning shame: soldier boys dying by the thousands without any Sacred Cause."

Both of these quotations are from Ralph Barton's short history of the United States entitled "God's Country," marked with three cockeyed stars, as who should say, bootleg brandy. Except for the Voltairean paragraph, a few verbal bits of luck, and the drawings, the book is entirely negligible except as an indication of what now constitutes common form in American satirical writing. Barton's satirical impulse may be powerful, but his imagination is so feeble that he can invent no framework for his story, merely following administration after administration, calling the President "the Mister," and the Republic the "Public Thing."

But as an example of the commonly accepted superior idea of America, this book is perfect. The paragraph about dying for a flag contains an idea hundreds of years old; it was after hearing of such wars that the King of Brobdingnag decided that human beings must be "the most pernicious race of odious little vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth." And the idea that Lincoln was a vulgar hypocrite is about ten

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years old. Yet of the two quotations, the first seems fresher and wittier, and the new truth is already stale. So is the idea that the day after he was elected on the slogan "He kept us out of war," Wilson "telephoned the Interests and said, 'Now what was it you wished to see me about'?" and promptly declared war. The emotion underlying these three examples varies; to me the first and third correspond to something essentially true (that men are led to fight by false associations and that the pressure to bring America into the war was not entirely idealistic) and the middle one to a falsehood (that Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in order to justify the war); yet the new truth bores me as much as the new lie, and the old truth (which isn't all of the truth) holds me profoundly interested.

It puzzles me to determine why Barton felt he wanted to write a book of this sort—or why anyone should want to. His vicious satire against trivial and mean things in contemporary America (appearing, when last I saw it, in a weekly page of Liberty) is brilliant and supremely successful; it seems to satisfy his sardonic humor. Upon this has been imposed the group of ideas which I have called common form: that the Queen of Spain in 1492 was probably the mistress of Columbus, that Washington was a pompous ass and a bad strategist, that Jefferson had his tongue in his cheek and enjoyed mulatto mistresses, that the Mexican War was entirely provoked by the United States, that the Maine was deliberately sent to Havana to provoke a war and was probably blown up by American Interests, and so forth. Imposed also upon an impulse to ridicule the pretentiousness of American life today is the obligation to undermine its belief in the genuineness of the ideals of the founders of the country.

Now if the history of the American democracy is a tragedy, it is one because the ideals were genuine and they have been forgotten. If equality before the law meant nothing in 1790, the fact that the oil scandals haven't resulted in a hundred jail sentences in 1929 means nothing. But if a handful of men were able to write into the Constitution and its Amendments laws guaranteeing freedom of various sorts, and if that freedom has been lost, our history has at least a shabby dignity. The grammar school histories forget the commercial side of the Revolution, and the new history is written as if the profound and powerful stream of ideas of Locke and the Encyclopedists never swept these shores. And what makes the persistence of both depressing is that the golden mean has not only proved pure gold in the hands of the Beards, but is unchallenged for historical accuracy.

Why, then, do intellectuals of all sorts accept the superficial picture of the United States, as cheap and as tawdry as the jingo idea? What precisely is the necessity for people to gibe and jeer at their country's past without discrimination, without facts, and without judgment? The source, in some cases, is dislike for the present; but in no case of which I am aware is that dislike joined to any bright conception of what the present conceivably could be, nor to any true analysis of the past. It is a popular game, belittling, about on the level of the vaudeville act in which a man puts a lighted cigar into one after the other of an Italian vendor's toy balloons.

It is said that emperors and priests trembled at the name of Voltaire; the emperors of finance and the priests of prohibition are made of sterner stuff—or there are no Voltaires. The ineffectiveness of the contemporary school of satire is extraordinary—and effectiveness must always be measured by the wincing of the galled jade, not by the applause of the satirists' friends, whose withers are, naturally, unwrung. I do not know whether the noblemen of pre-Revolutionary France believed less devoutly in their divine rights than the Stratons, Willebrandts and Sumners of our own time do; but Voltaire was able to make them think of his ideas and was a bogeyman to frighten their children. Perhaps it was because Voltaire was willing to live in exile; perhaps it was because his conception of what he was fighting *for* was as clear as his analysis of what he was fighting against; perhaps he was a genius. Any one of the three suppositions is enough to disqualify our contemporary satirists from his ranking.

I read recently the statement that satire was always the favored weapon when the foibles of the many displeased the superior few; it seems to me that the reverse can be true, and I suggest to the satirists that their comment on America of both the present and the past will improve if they first sharpen their weapons—on themselves. Nothing is more appropriate for satire than the glee of little boys of forty and fifty saying bad words out loud, or the maniacal fury of anti-Puritans smashing lollypops and calling them ikons; and the picture of several hundred satirists jeering at the way Americans live, while they themselves struggle for the ordinary rewards of the American way of life—for money and speed and the front page—might be made funny. Mr. Barton, incidentally, has the crayon, if not the pen, for the job. GILBERT SELDES.

The Tragic Story

Thirteen Days, by Jeannette Marks. New York: Albert and Charles Boni. 132 pages. $2.

MISS MARKS' "Thirteen Days" is a record of the events during the respite between the day originally set for the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti and that of the burial of the two victims at Forest Hills, and a commemoration of the efforts of those who could not submit patiently to the decrees of Massachusetts justice, but strove to avert a fate terrible indeed for the two prisoners of seven years standing, and terrible for the society which doomed them. Painful and futile, sometimes grotesque and foolish as their action was, these volunteers deserve to be remembered when humanity points to its achievement in Fuller, Lowell and Thayer.

Miss Marks begins her account with her arrival at the shabby quarters of the Defense Committee at 256 Hanover Street, on August 10, where the committee, over a single tapped wire, sought to do battle for public opinion against battalions of machinery mobilized against them. There she found Mrs. Glendower Evans, Felice Felicani, "with his look of childlike spirituality," Rose Sacco "with uncropped auburn hair and the intelligent, good face," Gardner Jackson, Mary Donovan, Alfred Henry Lewis and others. It was only a few minutes before midnight, and Mary Donovan was actually telephoning Mr. Thompson, the attorney for the two men, in regard to claiming the bodies, when word came that a respite of twelve days had been granted.

Those twelve days were crowded ones. Arthur Hill, who had undertaken the defence, raced to Washington and to the farthest corner of Maine, to secure federal intervention; Arthur Garfield Hayes and Francis Fisher Kane sought Attorney General Sargent in his Vermont home to get permission to consult the files of the Department of Justice; a committee of citizens to ask for commutation

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was hastily organized by Paul Kellogg and promptly secured five hundred names, as printed by Miss Marks in an appendix; men and women well known to literature, Dorothy Parker, Lola Ridge, Ellen Hayes, Edna St. Vincent Millay, picketed the state house, under the direction of Captain Paxton Hibben, were arrested, bailed out, and returned to the line; Powers Hapgood was kidnapped to the psychopathic ward and kept incommunicado; Paula Holliday marched across the old Massachusetts colony from Provincetown to Boston, bearing a placard, "Save Sacco and Vanzetti! Is justice dead?" The twelve days passed, and once more the little band gathered at the headquarters in Hanover Street to enact the scene which had already been rehearsed—and this time there was no reprieve.

The last part of Miss Marks' book is devoted to the aftermath—the march to Forest Hills.

> The long wavering line of flame under rain—human hearts, crimson flowers, the undulating thousands of red arm bands, the hearses bearing the bodies of Sacco and Vanzetti—the great cortège of Sorrow went on. . . . And marching, marching, marching, beside them, unseen, unheard was another army—all the phantasmagoria of many forces, of hope, of despair, of hate, of love, the death, the life, of all the ages through which mankind, dusty and travel-stained, has fought his way upwards.

The police broke in upon the cortège at every opportunity, threw trucks in its way, rode down men and women and clubbed them. They cut the procession down from what Miss Marks estimates at 50,000, to 200, and by a last vicious assault routed this remnant, and denied them admission to the cemetery, "where they stood with bared heads before the closed gates." This was the law and order against which Sacco and Vanzetti had dared to rebel.

Miss Marks has included in her narrative many of the touching and noble utterances, to which the death of Sacco and Vanzetti gave occasion—none more beautiful than the words of the men themselves. Altogether the book is an appropriate memorial record, and it will be wanted by everyone who would recall the Sacco-Vanzetti case in the interest of a justice which is clean, even-handed, and honest, which can stand before the face of heaven with no recourse to foulness, cruelty and lies.

R. M. L.

Industrial Tales

Steel Chips, by Idwal Jones. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 324 pages. $2.50.

Hunky, by Thames Williamson. New York: Coward-McCann. 312 pages. $2.50.

WHILE shops do their work of making necessary material objects for sale, they are incidentally throwing off a little-considered by-product—the lives of their personnel. The factory outside a man is a bright, dramatic, inexorable place, but the topography inside his life is interesting, too. We have been led by Stuart Chase to believe that the man matters more than the machine.

Two novels as different as bread and metal castings have been produced within the month, both about shops and with the same broad plot. In each the hero learns a trade in a complex, fast-moving workshop. Bewildered at first and discouraged, he finds a friendly guide who is both a master craftsman and a rebel philosopher. The shop throws him in touch with a vivid and comparatively intelligent woman; he marries her and takes the burden of a child. He finishes his apprenticeship and wins promotion. Portentous rumblings of Socialist theory occur in both books, without perceptible conclusion.

"Steel Chips" shows the outside—a symphonic picture of a factory, with rapid metallic rhythms and the sinuous shifting progress of a vast human machine. The procession clatters past: mechanics with their lathes and cranes and gouges, their dinners and fishing-rods and clarinets; sharp-faced bosses, sub-bosses, and super-bosses; watchmen and tailors and cooks and prostitutes; working-class artists and wits and scholars—clustered here and there in various meetings and lectures, a cock-fight, a clambake, and a strike. The thread of the story can hardly hold so crowded a chain. Bram Dartnell, a decently pugnacious young misfit of a hero, is never quite seen—perhaps it doesn't matter. Bertha, his sweetheart, is more elusive than the Benda drawing she resembles, occupying some 30 scattered pages out of 324. The writing is sophisticated and brilliantly unemphatic, if not always clear. The machine whirrs and glitters, without pausing to explain.

If "Steel Chips" is a *ballet mécanique,* "Hunky" is a slow, wailing folk song. There emerge the hulk of muscle, the dim blue eyes of Jencic, the bakery worker. He tries to get back his job by smashing the machine that has taken it, but does not achieve the logical effort of looking for another. Jencic's career follows the same pattern as Bram's, with more failures, a worthless wife, and a baby that is not his. In the struggle to understand himself and solve his problems in a new and unintelligible world, he finally gains what Bram with all his fluency never achieves —personal articulateness. The shop has galvanized its creature into a man.

Written for sophisticated, unmechanized readers, both books are in a way literature of escape. With the South Seas fairly played out and the underworld growing familiar, the inside of a factory takes on a glamor for those who do not know it. But its freshness must wear off, like the other external picture. Perhaps the last refuge will be the cool translucent depths of a half-aware mind like Jencic's, where every experience is new and vast. Leaving our own superior awareness comfortably on the surface, we marvel at the strange plants and fantastic monsters into which common events are refracted, in the dark water of his consciousness.

MARIAN TYLER.

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